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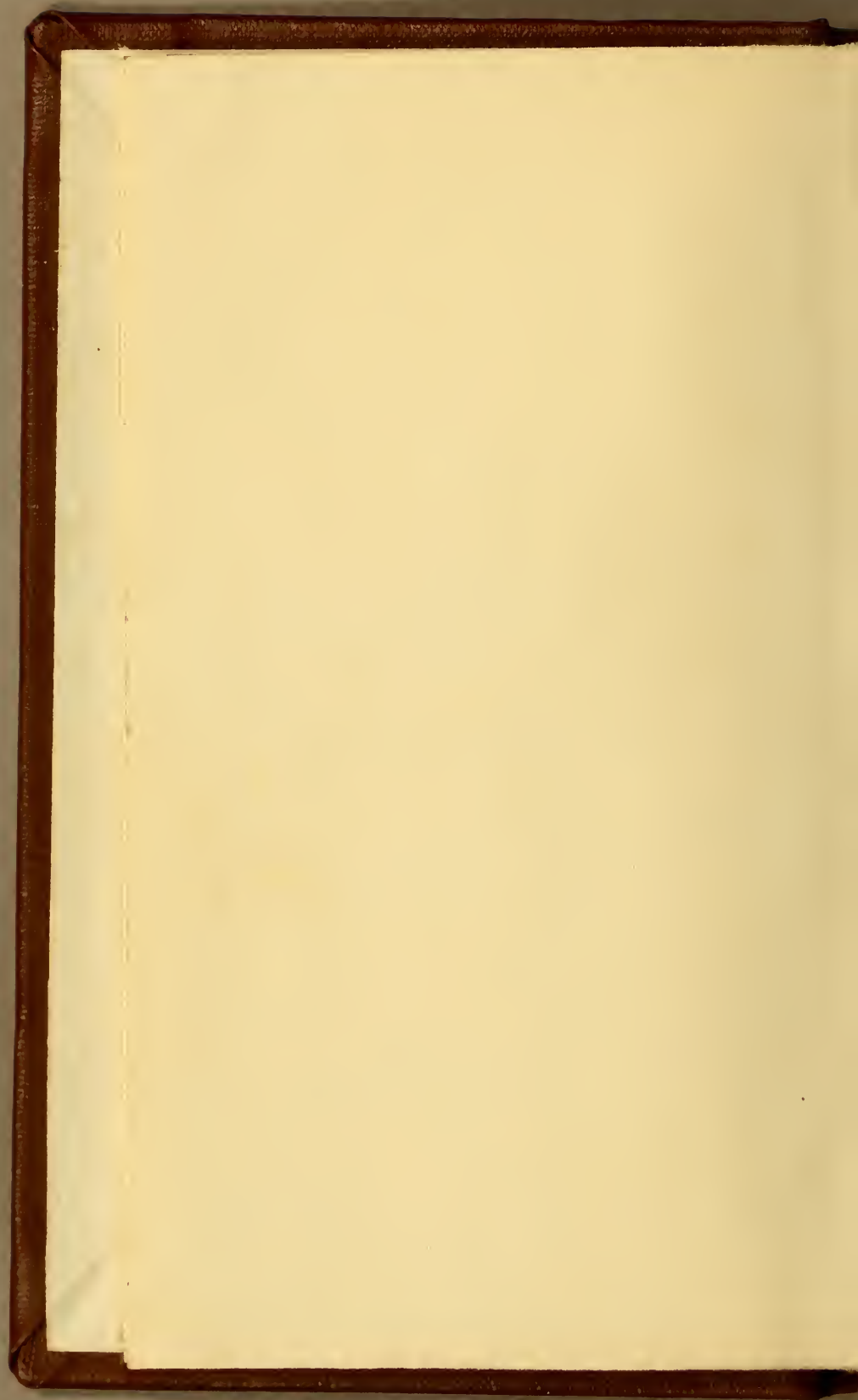
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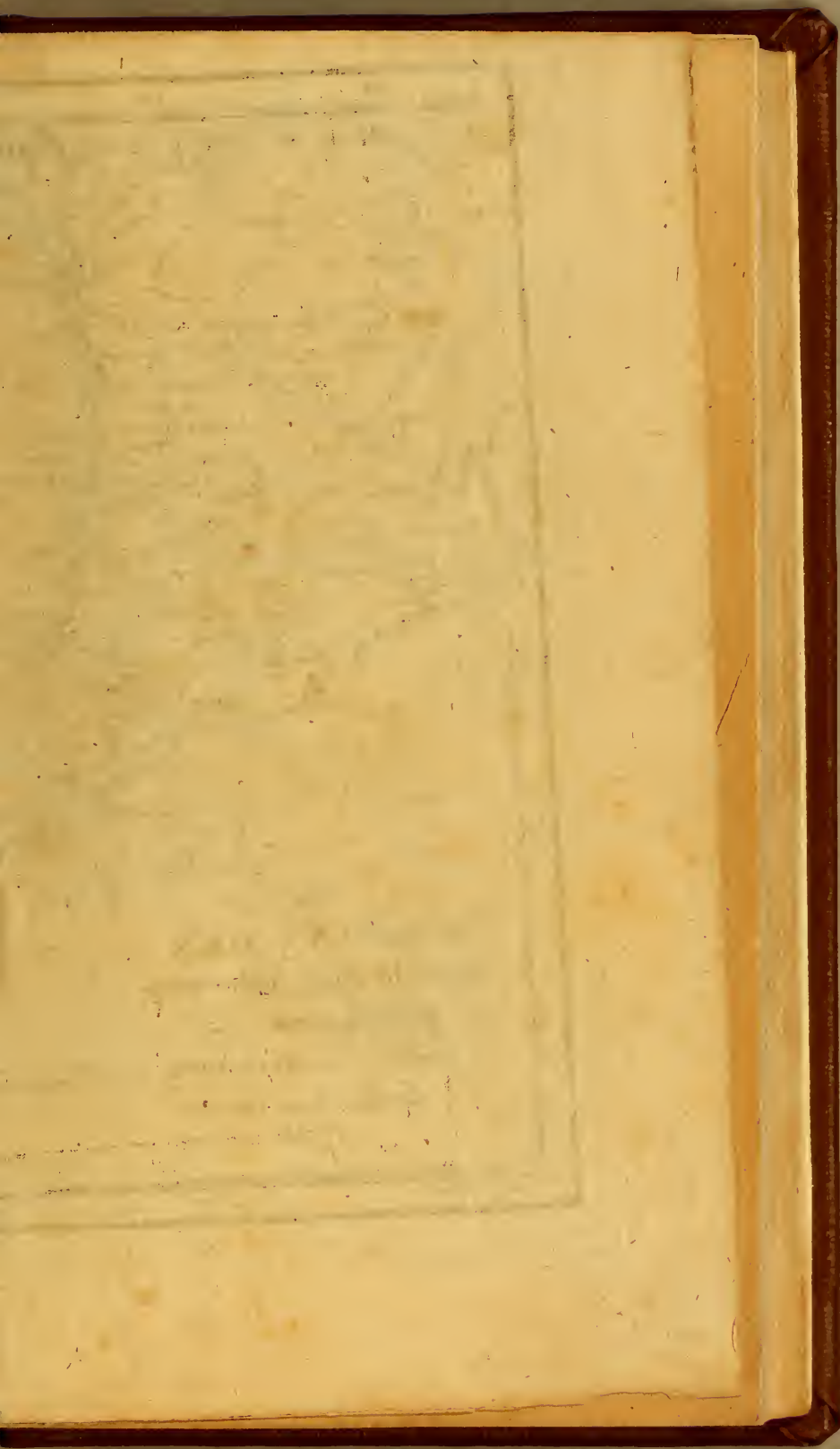


*Bequest of*  
**MAURY A. BROMSEN**  
APRIL 25, 1919—OCTOBER 11, 2005













*G. Manigault.*

THE  
HISTORY  
CIVIL AND COMMERCIAL,  
OF THE  
BRITISH COLONIES  
IN THE  
*WEST INDIES.*

To which is added,  
AN HISTORICAL SURVEY  
OF THE  
FRENCH COLONY  
IN THE  
*ISLAND OF ST. DOMINGO.*

ABRIDGED FROM  
THE HISTORY WRITTEN  
BY BRYAN EDWARDS. Esq.

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*ILLUSTRATED WITH A MAP.*

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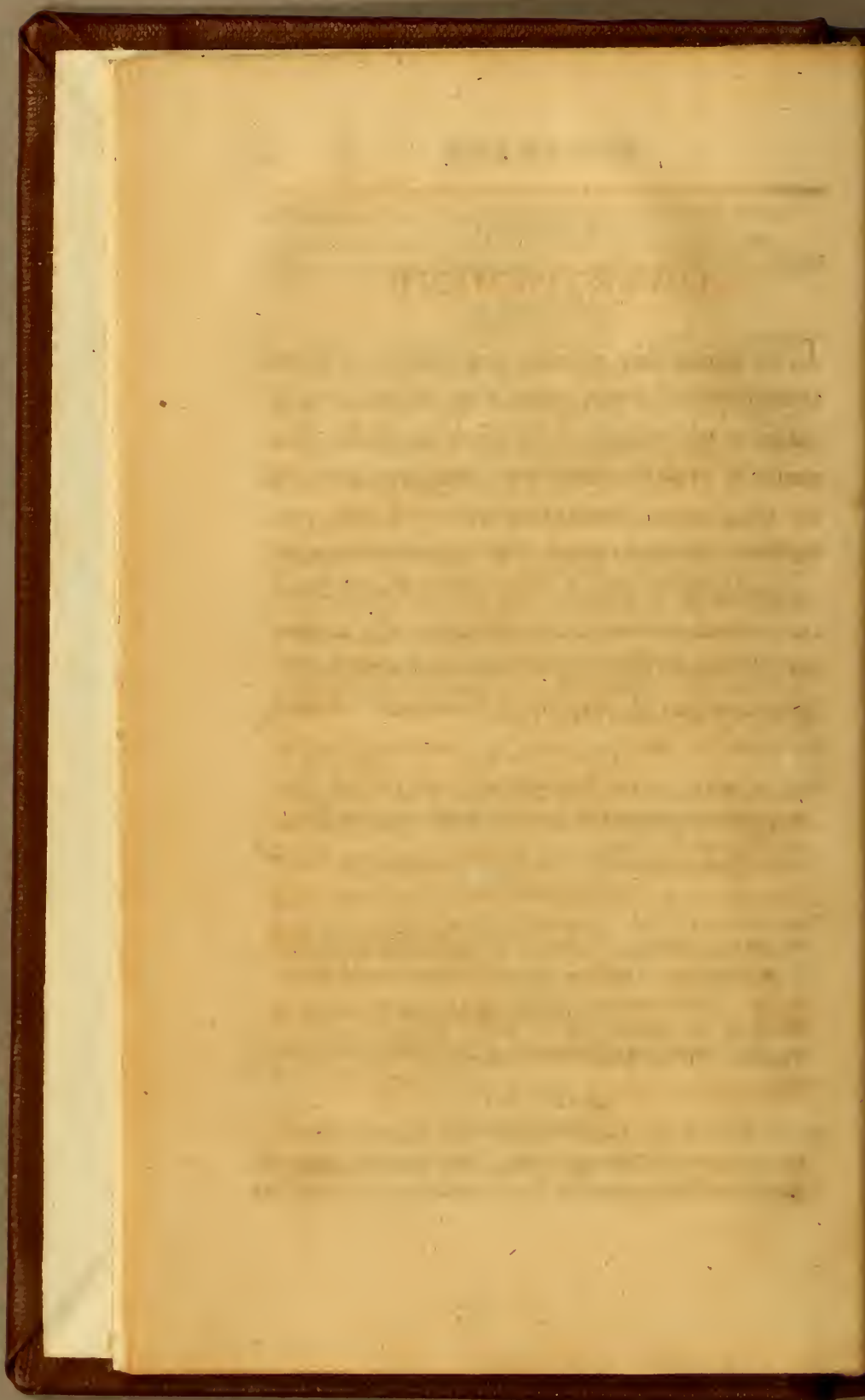
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is unnecessary to offer any apology for the abridgment of a performance so interesting in its nature as the original of the following work. The reader of modern history must undoubtedly regard the West Indian Islands, their discovery, their productions, and their progress in improvement, as no inconsiderable department of his inquiries; and to the political economist, it is of importance to learn the nature and extent of our commerce with so conspicuous a part of the British dominions. It must be confessed, that in a work so limited as the present, a very minute student of these subjects may not possibly find every article of information; but to the bulk of readers, it is apprehended, the utility of the work, as a relation of facts and circumstances, will be admitted. It has been the abridger's wish to omit no part of the narration that could be received; so that, satisfied with being perspicuous, he has not aimed at elegance of expression, a quality difficult to unite with a close compression of facts.

The work of Mr. Edwards is highly valuable for the interesting and important state papers which it

contains, and which the writer's peculiar situation so well enabled him to obtain. In the illustration and support of facts that are liable to contradiction, papers of this nature are eminently useful; they have been therefore admitted to as great an extent as the limits of an abridgment would allow, in order to recompense the reader in some degree for the amusing appendixes of the original. The same observation applies to the lists of shipping, &c. under the article of Commerce; and the same care has been taken to insert them, as far as possible, unmutated.

The remarks and opinions of the original author have not been at all times taken into the abridgment; but where they are introduced, the reader is troubled with no counter remarks from the abridger. In taking notice of one opinion of Mr. Edwards, a passage from a well known author is subjoined. This may be departing from the strict path of abbreviation; but in the circumstances where it is introduced, it was thought entirely necessary; and as the author quoted writes upon the same subject, the digression is less to be remarked.



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HISTORY  
OF THE  
*WEST INDIES.*

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BOOK I.

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CHAPTER I.

Geographical Arrangement—Name—Climate—Sea Breeze and Land Wind—Animals and Vegetables—Sublimity of the Mountains, &c. &c.

THE ever-memorable Columbus was induced to set sail in quest of a new continent, from the received opinion of his time, that a nearer passage might be explored to the East Indies, by a voyage to the westward. The discovery of the Pacific Ocean demonstrated this mistake; but still those islands which Columbus had visited, retained the

appellation of the Western Indies, in contradiction to the Indies of the East.

Under this name are comprehended that large group of islands which extend in a curve from the Florida shore, on the north peninsula of America, to the Gulf of Maracaybo, on the southern. Spanish navigators have divided them into Windward and Leeward (*Bortavento* and *Sotavento*); and, in strict language, the term Windward applies to the Caribbean Isles; and Leeward, to the four larger ones, Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola, and Porto Rico: But, in English geography, they are divided according to the course of the trade-wind; the Windward islands terminating with Martinico, and the Leeward stretching from Martinico to Porto Rico.

As all the West India islands lie beneath the tropic of Cancer, there is little variety of temperature, except such as arises from the elevation of land.

The vernal season in these parts may be said to commence with May. The parched savannahs now change their aspect, from a withered brown, to a fresh and delightful green. Gentle southern showers presently set in, which, falling about noon, occasion a bright and rapid vegetation. At this period, the medium height of the thermometer is  $75^{\circ}$ .

After these vernal showers have continued for about a fortnight, the season advances to maturity, and the tropical summer burns in its full glory.



During some hours in the morning, when the land breeze has not yet sprung up, the blaze of the sun is fierce and intolerable; but as soon as this agreeable wind arises, the extreme warmth is abated, and the climate becomes even pleasant in the shade. The thermometer now stands generally  $75^{\circ}$  at sunrise, and  $85^{\circ}$  at noon.

But whatever inconvenience the inhabitants of these islands may sustain from diurnal heat, it is amply recompensed by the beauty and serenity of their nights. The moon rises large and refulgent in the cloudless horizon: The Milky Way and the planet Venus glow with a brightness unknown in our heavens: The landscape is fair and beautiful, and the air cool and delicious.

About the middle of August the thermometer rises to an unwonted height. The refreshing breeze dies away, and the large red clouds that skirt the southern horizon betoken the approach of rains. The clouds roll horizontally towards the mountains: The thunder reverberates from peak to peak, and the whole scene becomes impressive and sublime. It is at this period that hurricanes, those irresistible visitations of Divine vengeance, are so frequently felt.

In November or December the north wind commences. It is at first attended with heavy showers of hail, till at last the atmosphere brightens, and the weather, till March, may be called winter. It is a winter, however, remote from the

horror of northern severity ; cool, wholefome, and delicious.

This description of climate must not be held as minutely applicable to all the West India islands. Size, cultivation, a mountainous surface, and other unnoticed circumstances, may occasion a diversity of climate throughout the whole.

Prejudiced and ignorant writers have described the West India islands, when first discovered by Spanish navigators, to have been noxious and impenetrable deserts. To be convinced that this assertion is false, we need only consult the expressions of Columbus himself, when he informs his sovereign Ferdinand of his newly acquired dominions. “ There is a river (he observes) which dis-  
“ charges itself into the harbour that I have nam-  
“ ed Porto Santo, of sufficient depth to be navi-  
“ gable. I had the curiosity to sound it, and  
“ found eight fathom. Yet the water is so limpid,  
“ that I can easily discern the sand at the bottom.  
“ The banks of this river are embellished with  
“ lofty palm-trees, whose shade gives a delicious  
“ freshness to the air ; and the birds and the  
“ flowers are uncommon and beautiful. I was so  
“ delighted with the scene, that I had almost come  
“ to the resolution of staying here the remainder  
“ of my days ; for believe me, Sire, these coun-  
“ tries far surpass all the rest of the world in plea-  
“ sure and conveniency ; and I have frequently  
“ observed to my people, that, with all my endea-

“ yours to convey to your Majesty an adequate  
“ idea of the charming objects which continually  
“ present themselves to our view, the description  
“ will fall greatly short of the reality.”

Such is the admiration professed by a man whose veracity has never been suspected. If at any time these regions of beauty and fertility relapsed into barrenness or noxious vegetation, it must be attributed alone to the extirpation of their original cultivators, by the sanguinary emigrants of Spain.

The truth is, that, in their original state, these islands were highly improved by cultivation. Their savannahs or plains yielded abundance of Turkey wheat, and their woods, being cleared below, afforded a constant and agreeable shade, excluding the blaze of the sun, but admitting the circulation of the air.

Such were these blooming orchards and woods of perennial verdure, of a growth unknown to the frigid clime and less vigorous soil of Europe. What European forest ever gave birth to a stem like the ceiba\*, which, hollowed into a vessel, has been known to carry an hundred persons; or the still more gigantic fig-tree, the sovereign of the vegetable creation—itself a forest.

But the majestic scenery of the groves is heightened by the forms which inhabit them. The sovereign Disposer of created beings seems to have been singularly partial to these islands, in leaving

\* Wild cotton tree.



them destitute of those noxious serpentine tribes, which infest other regions of the same latitude. The alligator is indeed seen on their banks; but I cannot be persuaded by all that has been said of the fierce nature of this animal, but that he is shy, and even cowardly: at all times disposed to relinquish the haunts of men. As to their lizards, they are sportive and harmless.

Anciently their woods were frequented by a smaller species of the monkey race, a pleasant and innocent little sporter. But these, like the beautiful flamingo, a large and elegant bird, arrayed in the brightest scarlet, have been nearly extirpated. Still, however, the parrot and the parroquet enliven their woods. But the boast of these groves is the humming bird; whose minute form and plumage of glowing, rich, and diversified lustre, render it the most beautiful and surprising of the feathered race.

It is true, the beauty of tropical birds is all that they have to recommend them; yet their woods are not destitute of harmony. The note of the mock-bird is highly pleasing; while the hum of myriads of busy insects, and the plaintive melody of stock doves, form a concert, which, if it cannot awaken the fancy, may at least sooth the affections, and give harmony to repose.

But leaving these minuter objects, the mind is fixed in deeper contemplation in looking to the enormous hills of these regions, which rise above the storms, and repose in eternal snow. To the

spectator looking down from these heights, the whole scene appears like enchantment. While all is calm and serene in the higher regions, the clouds are seen below sweeping along the sides of the mountains in vast bodies, till, growing more ponderous by accumulation, they fall at length in torrents of water on the plains. The sound of the tempest is distinctly heard by the spectator above; the distant lightning is seen to irradiate the gloom; while the thunder, reverberated in a thousand echoes, rolls far beneath his feet.

## CHAPTER II.

Of the Caribes, or ancient Inhabitants of the Windward Islands  
—Origin—Character—Manners—Persons, and Domestic Habits—Education—Arts and Manufactures—Religion—Conclusions on the whole.

HAVING thus delineated the climate and seasons, and attempted to impress the reader with some faint idea of the beauty and magnificence with which the hand of nature hath arrayed these islands, I shall next proceed to inquire after those inhabitants to whose support and conveniency they were chiefly found subservient when they first came to the knowledge of Europe.

Hispaniola was the first island which had the honour of receiving Columbus, after a voyage the most wonderful and important that is recorded in history. He found that the possessors of this and the three other islands, which by Spanish navigators were denominated the Leeward, were a simple, hospitable, and happy people ; but he was informed that there lay to the eastward a barbarous and warlike nation called Caribbees or Caribes, a race of cannibals, who frequently made terrible incursions on their more peaceable neighbours, and carried havock and devastation wherever they conquered. Columbus discovered, in his second voy-



age, that these ferocious cannibals were inhabitants of the Windward Isles.

Historians have laboured to discover by what extraordinary causes two nations, so remote in character, should have lived in such propinquity of situation. Rochefort, an historiographer of this country, assigns many plausible reasons for supposing, that the natives of the larger islands were remnants of the aborigines of the West Indies; and that the fiercer Caraibes having emigrated in a swarm from the Indians of Apalachia, had extirpated all the original natives, except those whom the size of their kingdoms and number of inhabitants had defended from entire devastation.

But Martyr, a still more sagacious historian, has produced powerful arguments against the above supposition. It would be too tedious, however, to enter minutely into this dispute. Certain it is, that the different languages, and dissimilar traits of the two nations, exclude all supposition of their origin being common; but from what nations they emigrated, or from whence they drew their lineage, is difficult to determine, and unworthy of investigation.

Leaving this inquiry, let us proceed to select such uncontroverted facts as may communicate an idea of their manners and character. In performing this task, circumscribed as we are for materials, very important conclusions may be drawn in the study of human nature.

The courage or the cowardice of an individual

is always a prominent feature in his character, and nations are not less distinguished than individuals by the extent and nature of these qualities.

The Caraibes were courageous ; but their courage was that of barbarians, bloated with revenge and disgraced by cruelty. Inured to arms from their youth, and taught to prize no blessing so highly as military fame ; incapable, from habits of activity, to cultivate at home the blandishments of tranquillity, or the comfortable arts of peace ; they regarded war as the main object of their existence, and peace as a mere pause from hostilities, to recruit them for new revenge.

Their ardour in battle rose to insatiable fury ; for they devoured without remorse the bodies of such enemies as they had killed or taken prisoners in war.

This fact, so disagreeable in relation (though established), was at one period strenuously denied by those European philosophers, who, zealous in maintaining the dignity of our nature, impeached the veracity of all those who asserted the discovery of cannibals. But the discoveries which recent voyagers have made leave us now no room to distrust the existence of such degraded beings. As to the Caraibes, the charge is completely substantiated ; for Columbus relates, that, having landed at Guadaloup, he beheld in several cottages the heads and limbs of human bodies, recently separated, and evidently kept for occasional repasts !

Thus far, it must be confessed, the dispositions

of the Caribes leaves no very pleasing impression on our minds. In contemplating this circumstance in their manners, we can hardly consider them as human beings, but as monsters whom it was lawful to extirpate from existence. But the whole portrait of their character does not correspond to this disagreeable trait : We behold in the Caribe, warm friendship, energetic and dignified independence of mind, and some share of the social passions.

It is allowed, that with regard to the people of Europe, whenever any of them had acquired their confidence, it was given without reserve. Their friendship was as warm as their enmity was implacable. The Caribes of Guiana still fondly cherish the tradition of Raleigh's alliance, and to this day preserve the English colours which he left them at parting.

Of the loftiness of their sentiments, and their abhorrence of slavery, a writer, no way partial to them, gives the following illustration : " There is " not a nation on earth (says Labat) more jealous " of their independence than the Caribes ; and " when at any time they behold the deference " which an European observes to his superiors, " they despise us as abject slaves who can be so " base as to crouch before an equal."

Happy had it been that such consciousness of dignity had been adorned with mildness or humanity ; but their prevailing passion for war repressed those instincts of nature, which the voluptuousness of climate had otherwise produced. The



passion of love was not strongly felt: They seemed, from the nature of their decorations, rather desirous of impressing terror, than being objects of admiration; and, indeed, the hideous scars which disfigured their faces, their muscular and stout bodies, and the quick wild roll of their eyes, that seemed an emanation from their martial spirit, rendered their whole appearance striking and terrible. As soon as a Caraipe child was born, he was sprinkled with his father's blood. The ceremony was painful, in the extreme, to the father; but he submitted, from a belief that the hardness he displayed on such occasions would be ingrafted upon the spirit of his infant son.

Before the youth himself could be admitted to the honours of manhood, the most painful experiments were made upon his fortitude. Like the Spartan youth, he was tortured by the hands of his nearest relation, and like him, he established his reputation upon contempt of pain. When his patience had outbraved their persecution, "Now he is a man like ourselves" (they would say); and thenceforward admitted him to their battles and society.

The same admired fortitude, which uplifted the boy to the honours of manhood, was also made the test of superiority, when the ambitious became candidates for principality. The warrior was put to the most excruciating torture, before he could be deemed capable of acting as chief. The ambitious Caraipe who arrived to this dignity must have pur-



chased his honours at a dear price. From a people so fiercely independent, no spontaneous obedience could be expected. The chief had to console himself with the glory of his title, with the liberty he possessed of appropriating female captives to himself, and with the gifts he received, the most beautiful daughters of his countrymen.

From this last tribute, perhaps, the practice of polygamy arose. But, though bestowed as the reward of valour, the females were treated rather as slaves than domestics. They sustained every species of degrading labour, were treated without humanity or respect, and denied the privilege of eating in society with men. Such is the fate of all women among savages. The progress of a people in every thing valuable and humane is marked by the dignity and happiness of the female sex.

Besides the feather that was inserted in the perforated cartilage of his nose, and the teeth of his devoured enemies that were strung round his legs and arms, the Caraibe warrior could not be said to have any ornament or dress; nor indeed could clothing be necessary in a climate where the chillness of winter was never felt. A buskin, or half boot, wove of cotton, was worn by the women after the age of puberty; but to this distinction no captive female could aspire.

Their long black hair constituted the chief ornament of both sexes; an ornament also denied to captives. Like all other Americans, they eradicated the beard in its first growth; a circumstance

which led some to believe that Americans are naturally beardless; but ocular demonstration has shown the mistake.

The most remarkable circumstance about their persons was altering the configuration of the head, which being squeezed at birth between two boards, applied before and behind, made the fore and hinder head resemble two sides of a square. The miserable remnant of the natives in the Island of St. Vincent still retain this custom. Their villages resembled an European encampment, their cabins being made of poles drawn to a top, and covered with the leaves of palm-tree. In the middle of each village stood a large hall, where they convened, and eat in common. These halls were also the theatres of exercise, where their youth were trained to hardihood by athletic games, and fired to emulation by the speeches of their orators.

Their arts and manufactures, though few, displayed a degree of ingenuity not to be expected from a people so little removed from a state of mere animal nature. Columbus observed an abundance of substantial cotton cloth in all the islands which he visited; and the natives possessed the art of staining it with various colours, though the Caribes delighted chiefly in red. Of this cloth they made hammocks, or hanging beds, such as are now used at sea; for Europe has not only copied the pattern, but preserved the name. They possessed likewise the art of making vessels for domestic purposes, which they baked in kilns like the potters of Eu-

rope. From the ruins of these, lately dug up in Barbadoes, we learn that they far surpass those made by the Negroes, in thinness, smoothness, and beauty. Their baskets, composed of palmetto leaves, were singularly elegant; and we are told that their bows, arrows, and other weapons, displayed a neatness and polish which a skilful European artist would have found it difficult to have excelled, even with his own tools.

We are not accurately informed as to the nature and extent of their agriculture. Among such a rude people, the right of private property could not be definite. We find, accordingly, that there was a community of labour, and a community of goods in every village. All partook of the labour of tilling and sowing; and each family had its share from the public granary. Except the circumstance of their eating human flesh, their food seems in all respects to have been the same with that of the natives of the larger islands. But, although excessively voracious, they rejected some of the best bounties of nature. They never tasted the peccary, or Mexican hog; the manati, or sea-cow; nor the turtle. Some have ascribed this abhorrence of these delicious rarities to the influence of religious motives; and fanciful historians have not forgot that the Jews had a similar dislike to similar animals.

In tracing out their religious customs, we find a few the offspring of genuine nature; others, superstitious and unaccountable. On the birth of a



child, the father fasted for a whole day, a practice which no rational motives could influence. At the death of a father, their behaviour was decent and pious; they bewailed his loss with unaffected sorrow, then turning from the place of his abode, erected it in a different place.

In their religious belief there seems to have been a mixture of theism and idolatry; but their devotion was at all times rather the result of fear than of gratitude. Their ideas of a Supreme Being were gross and indistinct; and their prayers, which they offered up to him, through the medium of inferior deities, were not to implore his protection, but merely to deprecate the terrors of his vengeance. These inferior deities were, like the gods of the Romans, divided into superior and subordinate beings, national and domestic protectors; and what renders the similarity between the Roman and Caribbee worship complete, was their belief that every individual had his own peculiar deity, corresponding to the genius of the ancient mythology.

But besides their benevolent deities, they paid adoration to other spirits, in rites of a darker superstition. To avert the wrath of these demons, their magicians offered up their sacrifices and their prayers in consecrated places. On these occasions, the worshipper wounded himself with horrible gashes, conceiving, perhaps, that the fierce spirit of the demon was delighted with the groans of misery, and appeased by the plentiful flow of human blood.

Such are the most striking outlines in the character of the savage Caraibe. The picture is an assemblage of hard and uncouth features, whose expression, if not pleasing, is yet impressive, from their masculine boldness. Let such as are struck with the barbarity of these habits and manners beware of ascribing them to the genuine dictates of nature. Such ferocious savageness is not a state congenial to man. Had not the bias of humanity been in strong contradiction to such manners, it would not have required such unremitting discipline to steel the heart of the rising Caraibe against every feeling of sympathy and remorse. Compassion and kindness constitute the chief ornament and happiness of our life; and to the honour of humanity, they are the earliest propensities of our nature.

## CHAPTER III.

Of the Natives of Hispaniola, Cuba, Jamaica, and Porto Rico—  
Their Numbers—Persons—Genius and Dispositions—Government and Religion—Miscellaneous Observations respecting their  
Arts and Agriculture—Cruelty of the Spaniards.

I AM now to give an account of a mild and comparatively cultivated people, the ancient natives of Hispaniola, Cuba, Jamaica, and Porto Rico; for there is no doubt that the inhabitants of all those islands were of one common origin,—speaking the same language, possessing the same institutions, and in the practice of similar superstitions. Columbus himself treats them as such; and the testimony of cotemporary historians confirms his opinion.

By the formerly-mentioned natives of the Windward Islands, these islanders were considered as descended from a colony of Arrowauks, a people of Guiana; and there is no room to doubt the supposition of the Caribes on this occasion. Their opinion is supported by Raleigh, and others, who visited Guiana and Trinidad two centuries ago.

Historians disagree as to the number of inhabitants found by Columbus on his first visiting these islands. L. Casas computes the whole amount at six millions; but, from the accounts of other historians equally accurate, I am inclined to estimate the whole number at three, rather than six mil-



lions. Indeed, such are the accounts of the carnage made among those poor people by the Spaniards, that we are willing to hope their original numbers have been exaggerated by the followers of Columbus, from a fond propensity to magnify the importance of their discovery.

The children of both sexes, amongst this simple people, went entirely uncovered; and the only covering for man and woman was a piece of cotton cloth, tied around the waist, and, with the women, falling down to the knees. In their shapes, they were elegant and well proportioned, and taller than the Caribes, though by no means so muscular. Like the Caribes, they altered the configuration of the head; but their method was different; for the forehead was depressed, so as to give an unnatural thickness to the hinder part. The Spaniards, in relating this fact, give us an instance, at the same time, by what humane experiments they discovered it. Herrera relates, that a Spanish broadsword could not cleave the skull at one blow, but would frequently break short of it. Their hair was uniformly black, without any tendency to curl; their features were hard and unsightly; the face broad, and the nose flat; but, altogether, there was something in their countenances expressive of a frank and gentle disposition.

Modern philosophers, in delineating their character, have grossly misrepresented them, and, indeed, combined such inconsistent qualities as could not mingle in the same temper. They have been

accused of cowardice, indolence, and insensibility; feebleness of mind, as well as of constitution.

Their military spirit was unquestionably far inferior to the savage enthusiasm of the Carabbee warrior; but coldness to sensual pleasures was no part of their character. The truth is, that love with this happy race was not a transient or youthful passion; it was the source of all their joys, and the great object of their lives. A thirst for revenge never gave asperity to their tempers, and climate heightened the sensibility of their passions. That a people, possessing the means of luxury, without the necessity of toil, should be addicted to luxury, is a circumstance no way surprising. The want of labour might in some degree enervate their bodies; and this conclusion may be admitted, without degrading their natures, or pronouncing the climate (as some have ventured to do) to be incompatible with bodily vigour.

Their limbs, however, were pliant and active; they delighted and excelled in the exercise of dancing; and to that amusement they devoted the cool hours of night. "It was their custom (says Herrera) to dance from evening to the dawn; and although fifty thousand men and women were frequently assembled together on these occasions, they seemed actuated by one common impulse, keeping time by responsive motions with their hands and their feet, with an exactness truly wonderful."

Another diversion was prevalent among them,

called the *bato*; which, by the accounts given of it, seems to have resembled the English game of cricket. The players were divided into two parties, who alternately changed places; while an elastic ball, thrown dexterously backwards and forwards, was received on the head, the elbow, or the foot, and repelled with astonishing and inimitable force. Such exertions belong not to a people incurably enervated and slothful.

European writers, not satisfied with depreciating their personal accomplishments, have likewise pronounced their natural genius inferior to our own. Such philosophers ought to have recollected, that their situation alone, without recurring to other reasons, sufficiently accounts for the paucity of their ideas. Energy of mind originates not in the nature, but in the circumstances of an enlightened European. He is intellectual and accomplished, not from intuitive knowledge, but from that cultivation of his powers which his necessities or ambition may excite.

But whatever these Indians wanted in energy, was amply made up in the sweetness of their dispositions; since, from the evidence of all writers, the candid as well as the bigotted, they are represented to have been the most gentle and benevolent of the human race.

Among other instances of their benevolence, the following is not the least remarkable. Soon after Columbus's first arrival at Hispaniola, one of his ships was wrecked on the coast. The natives,



scorning to reap advantage from his distress, put to sea with eagerness to his relief. A thousand canoes were in motion; not a life was lost; and of the goods saved from the wreck, not an article was lost or embezzled. Guacanahari, the cacique, waited next day on Columbus; and perceiving that the ship itself, and some of the cargo, notwithstanding all exertions, was irrecoverably lost, consoled with Columbus in terms that excited surprise and admiration; and offered, with tears in his eyes, all that he possessed in the world to repair his misfortune. Who can be informed, without feeling the strongest indignation, that this unexampled benevolence was repaid, by Europeans, with the basest ingratitude? The Spanish ruffians fell a sacrifice to the just fury of the Indians; but Guacanahari was covered with wounds, in protecting them from his countrymen. Columbus returned, and the generous attachment of these benevolent people once more revived.

Bartholomew Columbus, who was appointed deputy governor in the absence of Columbus, gives us a pleasing account of the hospitality he met with in his progress through the island to levy tributes. The caciques, understanding the fondness of the Spaniards for gold, willingly gave all their stores; and those who had none gave provisions or cotton. Among the latter was Behechio, who invited the lieutenant and his attendants to his dominions. As the Spaniards drew near his palace, they were met by his thirty wives, who saluted them first with a

dance, and next with a general song. These matrons were succeeded by a train of virgins, distinguished as such by their appearance; the former wearing aprons of cotton cloth, while the latter were arrayed only in the innocence of pure nature. Their hair was tied simply with a fillet over their foreheads, or suffered to flow gracefully on their shoulders and bosoms. Their limbs were finely proportioned, and their complexions, though brown, were smooth, shining, and lovely. The Spaniards were struck with admiration, believing that they beheld the dryads of the woods, and the nymphs of the fountains, realizing ancient fable. The branches which they bore in their hands, they now delivered with lowly obedience to the lieutenant, who, entering the palace, found a plentiful, and (according to the Indian way of living) a splendid repast already provided. At night they reposed in cotton hammocks, and next morning were entertained with dancing and singing. For three days were the Spaniards thus nobly entertained, and on the fourth, the affectionate Indians regretted their departure.

The government of these islands was purely and absolutely monarchical; but the native mildness of their characters seems to have infused a gentleness even into the exercise of unlimited authority. Had their monarchs trampled upon their rights as far as their prerogative extended, their subjects must have been too debased to be capable of any such generosity as I have related.

Their caciques were hereditary, and had other

chiefs subordinate to themselves. Oviedo relates, that these princes were under the obligation of personally attending at the command of the Grand Cacique in peace as well as in war. Thus their government seems, in its outlines, to have resembled the ancient feudatories of Europe; but as to the minuter parts of their constitution, Spanish historians have not sufficiently informed us. The power of the cacique we find was hereditary; and Oviedo informs us, that one of the many wives of the cacique was held as reigning queen, and that the children of this lady, according to priority of birth, succeeded to the father's honours; but in default of issue by the favourite princess, the sisters of the cacique took place of the cacique's children by his other wives. It is plain that this regulation was intended to prevent disputes among a number of candidates for the throne, whose pretensions were equal.

The principal cacique surpassed his feudal dependants in exterior ornament and dignity, as well as authority. Like the nabob of the east, he was carried from one quarter of his dominions to another upon the shoulders of his subjects. His will was the supreme law; whatever his orders might be, even though commanding the unhappy victim to be his own executioner, the subject submitted without hesitation, from a belief that resistance would have been an unpardonable offence against the delegate of heaven.

Their sovereign, when dead, was still an object of veneration: his body was preserved by embowel-



ling, if he died at home ; but if his corpse could not be procured, from his having fallen in battle, his memory was fondly cherished by the zealous admiration of his countrymen.

Songs were composed in his praise, which were called *arietoes*. The recital of these was a ceremony of considerable importance ; it was made at their public dances, and accompanied with their wild, but impressive music of the shell and the drum. The exploits of the dead prince in war, and his benignity at home, were the themes of these effusions : thus they instructed the living, while they celebrated the dead.

In tracing their religious opinions, we are guided by historians to a single anecdote, which seems to indicate, that definite notions of future responsibility for the actions done in this life were received into their mythology. A venerable old man, in the Island of Cuba, approaching Columbus, presented a basket of fruit into his hands, and addressed him thus : “ Deign, O stranger, to accept of this gift. “ You are come into our country, and we are neither able nor willing to resist you. Whether “ you are mortal like ourselves, we know not ; but, “ if you expect to die, remember that, in the world “ to come, the situation of the good and bad shall “ be widely different. If you believe this truth, “ you certainly will not hurt those who do not injure you.” But their ideas of futurity, though precise, were not sublime : their heaven was like the paradise of Mahomet, or the elysium of the Pagans.

Still, however, true to the affectionate feelings of their nature, they fondly believed that their principal happiness would consist in the society of their departed friends.

Like the Caribes, they had an indistinct idea of one Supreme Creator, but this belief was clouded with childish absurdities; for their mythology related that their deity changed his abode at pleasure, from the sun to the moon, like a town and country house; and that his aged father and mother were still alive.

To this supreme creator they assigned no providence over his works; but represented him as indifferent to the happiness or misery of his creatures. They believed, however, that his original intention in creating the universe was benevolent; although the subordinate gods, to whose management he had confided his affairs, had grown malicious to mankind, and introduced evil and confusion. Their idols were hideous and frightful: they implored them not with reverence, but with terror; not with pious hope, but superstitious distrust.

Their *bohitos* or priests openly assembled in every village to invoke these demons in behalf of the people. These men added to the profits of their holy profession, the practice of medicine, and the education of children of the first rank: A combination of interests and respectable professions, which must have made them tyrants of considerable authority. Here, as well as in Europe, religion was made the instrument of civil despotism. The venerated bo-

hito sanctioned the words of the cacique, by pronouncing him the irresistible delegate of God, and it would have been horrible impiety for the subject to have controverted the decree.

Columbus and his people, on one occasion, detected this process of imposture, by dashing down the idol which uttered forth the oracles of the priest: A tube was thus discovered, which was covered with leaves, and ran to the inner apartment, where the priest applied his mouth and spoke. The cacique entreated Columbus to keep this detection a secret, as from this mode of chicanery he acquired his wealth and maintained his authority.

In point of improvement in those arts, which diversify the comforts of life, a comparison has been instituted between this people and the natives of Otaheite. I think the priority may with little hesitation be ascribed to the West Indians. Their agriculture has been represented as imperfect; but the direct testimony of the brother of Columbus discovers that their progress in cultivation was considerable. "The fields about Zaabra (says Bartholomew) were all covered with maize, like the corn fields of Europe, for above six leagues together." Dr. Robertson, among other authors, has given an unfavourable account of their agriculture; but he founds his conclusion on no other proof than that their implements of husbandry were made only of hard wood. The Doctor was not acquainted with the soil of these parts, else he would have known



that the soil is incapable of much resistance, and can be ploughed with materials softer than iron.

In a country so delightful, in a state of society so simple, and with dispositions so gentle and benevolent, these natives must have enjoyed almost the perfection of human felicity; but they little apprehended what vipers they cherished in their bosoms, when they admitted the emigrants of Spain to their confidence and hospitality. The enormities of the most outrageous tyrants, who ever sported with the convulsive agonies of their fellow creatures, fall infinitely short of the crimes which were committed in the conquest which Europe acquired over the New Hemisphere. Ten millions of the human species were, at a low computation, sacrificed in America and the West Indies, to the avarice, wanton barbarity, or religious (it should be called infernal) bigotry of Spain.

The amiable inhabitants of Hispaniola amounted, at the arrival of Columbus, to a million at least: Within the space of fifty years, they hardly amounted to sixty thousand. They were hunted down, like wild beasts in the fields, by a fierce species of dogs, who were trained to feed upon their flesh, and to lap their blood. The more religious part of the Spanish murderers would force them into the water for baptism, and cut their throats the next moment lest they should apostatize. It was also a common practice to burn or hang thirteen in a morning, in honour of our Saviour and his twelve

apostles. "To keep their hands in use," they instituted games, where their emulation was excited by laying wagers, "who could strike off an Indian head with greatest dexterity." The Spaniards at home heard of all these enormities; but they had neither justice nor compassion to protect the innocent. When at last the delightful plains of Hispaniola were almost entirely despoiled of their original cultivators, grants were issued by the Spanish court to supply the mines, which were now begun to be dug upon the island, by those remaining islanders, whom they could seize and drag to captivity. To effect this inhuman plan, vessels were sent out to the Lucayos, whose commanders informed the natives, that they had come to convey them to the land where their forefathers now lived; and that in this delightful paradise they would live in perpetual happiness with their departed friends. The credulous people were deceived, and thus forty thousand were allured to the misery which awaited them in the dismal mines of Hispaniola. The poor Lucayans, finding their miserable mistake, would refuse all sustenance, and retiring to the sea-shore of Hispaniola, which lay opposite to their own country, would cast many a look towards their native islands, and inhale with eagerness the sea breeze which sprung from that quarter \*. When nature was at length exhausted with grief and hunger, they would stretch out their arms, as if to take a last farewell embrace, and expire upon the coast. Philosophers have some-

\* One of these wretched Lucayans, more inventive than his

times asserted, that no human being will commit an unjust or barbarous action, without the view of reaping an actual benefit to himself. Every action has surely its motive ; but can it be explained from what prospect of advantage the following horrid, but authenticated action was committed by the accursed executioners of Spain? L. Cafas (who wrote his history shortly after these enormities were perpetrated, and who must have been easily detected had he uttered a falsehood) gives us the following relation, to which he was an eye witness.

“ A Spanish commanding officer had gone to his  
 “ afternoon slumbers, and left his officer on guard  
 “ to transact the business of the afternoon, which  
 “ was only to roast four or five principal Indians to  
 “ death. The officer executed his duty by apply-  
 “ ing them to a slow fire ; but the screams of tor-  
 “ ture, which the poor wretches emitted, were so  
 “ loud as to disturb the commander and keep him  
 “ from sleep : he sent orders that they should be  
 “ strangled ; but the officer on guard (I know his  
 “ name, says L. Cafas, and his relations in Seville)  
 “ caused their mouths to be gagged, that their cries  
 “ might not be heard, and stirring up the fire with  
 “ his own hands, roasted them deliberately till they  
 “ all expired !”

countrymen, having been accustomed to build cottages in his own country, framed a canoe out of a jaruma tree, and put out to the ocean, in company with a man and woman. His voyage was prosperous for 200 miles ; but alas ! when almost within sight of his long wished for shores, he was taken by a Spanish ship, and carried back to misery !



## CHAPTER IV.

Land Animals used as Food—Fishes—Wild Fowl—Indian Method of Fishing and Fowling—Esculent Vegetables, &c.—Conclusion.

IN the Windward Islands are found several species of animals which are not possessed by the four larger islands: and it is likewise observable, that all the animals found in these islands are found in Guiana. From this a very probable conjecture may be derived, viz. that the Caraibbee Islands were peopled from the south. Of their animals the most remarkable are the following:

The agouti, or Indian coney, called by Linnæus the *mus aguti*, and by Pennant and Buffon the *cavy*, is an animal which appears to be of an intermediate species between the rat and the rabbit. It is seldom or never seen in any of the islands to the windward, but frequently in Hispaniola, Porto Rico, and the higher grounds of Jamaica.

The pecary, or Mexican hog, called by Linnæus the *sus tajacu*, was found in abundance in the West Indies at the arrival of the Spaniards; but it is now totally exterminated; most probably from its courage, which we are told prompted it to turn upon its pursuers, and thus brought it within the reach of shot. It is now brought from the continent as a curiosity: I think it differs very little

from the hogs of Europe, except in the aperture of the back, which discharges a much esteemed scent, of a musky kind. The aleo was in the New Hemisphere, what the dog is with us. The aleo, however, although similar in most other respects to our dog, did not possess the power of barking. A Spanish historian informs us, that its nose resembled that of a fox; and adds, that the Indians were so much attached to this little favourite, that they carried it about with them wherever they went.

The monkey was found in great variety. From the prejudice of custom, we are apt to look upon this animal as unfit for food; it has been found, however, by those who were reduced to make use of it, to be palatable and nourishing: its flavour is like that of a hare.

The iguana, or guana, is a species of the lizard (a class of animals which historians hesitate whether to rank as quadrupeds or insects). The guana is generally found among fruit trees; it is a perfectly gentle and harmless animal; although its appearance cannot be the most inviting, being generally three feet long, and proportionably thick. Its flesh was held in high estimation by the Indians; and I have been informed by a connoisseur in matters of taste, that it is no way inferior to green turtle. The French and Spaniards made use of it wherever it could be found; but the English, more whimsical in their palate, seldom served it at genteel tables.

Labat informs us, that the mode of catching this animal was as follows: They beat among the bushes

till they found their game basking on a tree. A Negro then began whistling with all his might, and the charmed guana sat still and listening, till the man came near enough to tickle his neck with a rod which he carried in his hand. This operation was also highly pleasing to the animal, who at length turned on his back, and fell asleep, like a cat before the fire. The Negro then slipt a noose over his head, and carried him home alive.

The mountain crab is the most surprising animal to be found in these islands. It now survives only in few places, and I am afraid it will be soon totally extirpated. This species of animals live in a state of social society, and migrate in millions to the sea side once a year. The line of their journey is geometrically direct, and nothing will turn their progress from a straight line, unless they meet with a stream. They divide into separate bands, of which the strongest take the lead, and march like pioneers before an army. They prefer marching in the night, unless it rains; but if the sun should break suddenly upon them, they halt till the excessive heat is over. When at last they reach the shore, they wash the spawn from their bodies. The eggs are hatched in the sand, and when the young crabs have formed, they parade back to the mountains, in equal numbers, and with equal regularity. The old crabs also return, after disburdening themselves of their spawn. They now begin to fatten, and retiring to separate holes, prepare for moulting or changing their coats. During this change they remain quite inactive, till



the old shell bursts, and the animal, now covered only with a thin membrane, extricates his limbs by degrees. In this moulting state, they are, without doubt, one of the most delicious morsels that nature can afford.

Of all the delicious birds which the West Indian woods produce, the most justly celebrated are the *ortolans*. They are birds which usually visit these islands in October, whither, it is supposed, they migrate from Carolina when the rice grows hard. It is not, however, within our plan to treat, with any degree of minuteness, of the different species of birds and fowls which their marshes and forests produce. We shall only at present describe two very singular methods of fowling and fishing practised, in the times of Oviedo, by these islanders.

“ Their method of fishing (says that historian) is  
“ to take out a remora, or sucking fish, which is regularly educated to the sport. The fish is about  
“ a span long; it is secured to the canoe by a line  
“ many fathoms in length, and as soon as it perceives a fish in the water, it darts like lightning  
“ upon its prey. The Indian loosens the line; but  
“ keeps it from sinking by means of a buoy that  
“ makes it float upon the surface of the water.  
“ When the remora seems perfectly fatigued with  
“ dragging about the buoy, the Indian takes it up  
“ and separates the sucker from its prey. Thus,  
“ turtles have been caught of such weight, as no  
“ single man could sustain.”

To catch their wild-fowl, they adopted a plan

equally ingenious. When they perceived them swimming upon the water, a man covered his head with a calabash, or gourd, and flipt gently into the pond, keeping only his head above the water, and leaving apertures for his breath and sight. As the gourd was no uncommon object to the fowls, they were not frightened to see it floating; so that the Indian had an opportunity to approach them gradually, till at last, by pulling them one after another, with a hasty jerk below the water, he fastened as many as he could to his girdle, and returned loaded with prey.

It were needless, at this period, to give a circumstantial account of all the valuable esculent vegetables which are produced in the West Indies. Authors of great information and assiduity have favoured the world with voluminous descriptions of these productions; in particular, Sloane, Brown, and Hughes, have been systematical upon the subject. There is still, however, a deficiency in every treatise, which the curious reader consults; namely, the want of punctuality in discriminating the indigenous species of vegetables, from those which have been imported from abroad.

## APPENDIX TO BOOK I.

Containing a Short Dissertation on the Origin of the Caraïbes.

THE origin of the Caraïbes is not a subject of the highest importance, and there are few materials which afford certain proof of the justice of either one supposition or another with respect to their ancestry. The question, however, has been matter of much learned disputation, and it is proper that I should mention the arguments which have inclined me to form an opinion on the subject.

Whatever may have been the origin of the other American nations, the probability seems to be, that the Caraïbes (at least) derived their origin from the East.

The advocates for this supposition (it is to be acknowledged) have stretched their theory too far; they are not satisfied with proving, that America was, in all probability, visited by Europeans long before the date of Columbus; but assert, that navigators passed backwards and forwards from shore to shore, and that the Western Hemisphere was well known to the ancients.

We have no proof of a vessel having at any period returned from America; but the want of this proof does not establish that America was not visited by Europeans previous to the date already



mentioned. On the contrary, there is direct evidence that such a circumstance was possible, and there is strong probability that it actually took place.

From the authority of Procopius, the secretary of the celebrated Belisarius, we are assured that the Phœnicians, Egyptians, and Canaanites navigated the Western Ocean many hundred years before the Christian era. The Phœnicians discovered the Azores; their successors, the Carthaginians, discovered the Canaries; and of the naval skill of this latter people we must form no mean estimate, from their having sailed along the African coast, within five degrees of the line, two centuries and a half before the birth of Christ. The *vestigia ædificiorum*, which they there discovered, are proofs of an advanced state of society among a people unnoticed in tradition.

Notwithstanding the bold assertion of that celebrated historiographer of America (Dr. Robertson), that all accounts of Phœnician and Carthaginian voyages, received through the medium of Greek and Roman writers, are of suspicious authority; I cannot help supposing, that from the following well authenticated fact, ancient voyagers were capable of as great undertakings as that of sailing to the opposite coast of America.

“Lybia (says Herodotus) is every where surrounded by the sea, except on that side where it joins to Asia. Pharaoh Necho made this manifest. After he had desisted from his project of

“ digging a canal from the Nile to the Arabian  
“ Gulf, he furnished a body of Phœnicians with  
“ ships, commanding them to enter the northern  
“ sea by the Pillars of Hercules, and return by that  
“ route to Egypt. The Phœnicians, therefore, sail-  
“ ing from the Red Sea, navigated the Southern  
“ Ocean. At the end of autumn they anchored;  
“ and, going ashore, sowed the ground, as those  
“ who make a Lybian voyage always do, and staid  
“ the harvest. Having cut the corn, they sailed.  
“ Thus, two years having elapsed, they returned  
“ to Egypt, passing by the Pillars of Hercules, and  
“ relating a circumstance, which I can scarcely  
“ credit, namely, that sailing round Lybia, the sun  
“ rose on the right hand.”

I would ask how Herodotus came to know that Africa was encompassed with water to the south, unless such a voyage had been actually made.

It is true, such an attempt would have been impracticable to the limited nautical skill of a Greek or Roman voyager; but there is no doubt that the commerce of Phœnicia and Carthage brought the art of ship-building and navigation to a great height, in very remote periods of antiquity, although the spirit of discovery lay for many ages in darkness, till it was revived by the improvements of the fifteenth century.

The foregoing relations evince that the ancients were acquainted with the navigation of the Western Ocean; and if we inquire into the nature of the winds and currents on the African coast, we

must admit that it could not possibly happen but that some vessel, proceeding on such a voyage, if she happened to lose her masts, must have been carried before the wind towards the West Indies or Brazil.

In modern times, accidents of a similar nature have several times occurred; and surely there is no room to conjecture that they did not occur in more remote periods. Where the same causes exist, the same effects must follow.

Glass, in his History of the Canary Isles, informs us, that a small bark, bound from Lancerota to Teneriffe, was driven by stress of weather from her course, and obliged to drive westward at the mercy of the waves, till she was met by an English cruizer, within two days sail of Caracca, who, after relieving their distresses, directed them to the port of Guaira on that coast.

The same author relates, that, when he was in St. Joseph's in Trinidad, a small vessel, belonging to Teneriffe, and bound for the Canaries, had been driven from her course, and carried by the winds and currents into that island. The wretched seamen, having only some days provision on board, were worn down with hunger and fatigue to the appearance of skeletons before they reached the port.

An additional proof that America was visited by other nations before being discovered by Columbus, is the well known fact of Columbus himself



having found the stern post of a ship lying on the shore at Guadaloupe.

It must have been some accidental voyage of the like nature which drove the colony of Negroes, mentioned by Martyr to have been found at Quarequa in the Gulf of Darien, from the African to the American shore.

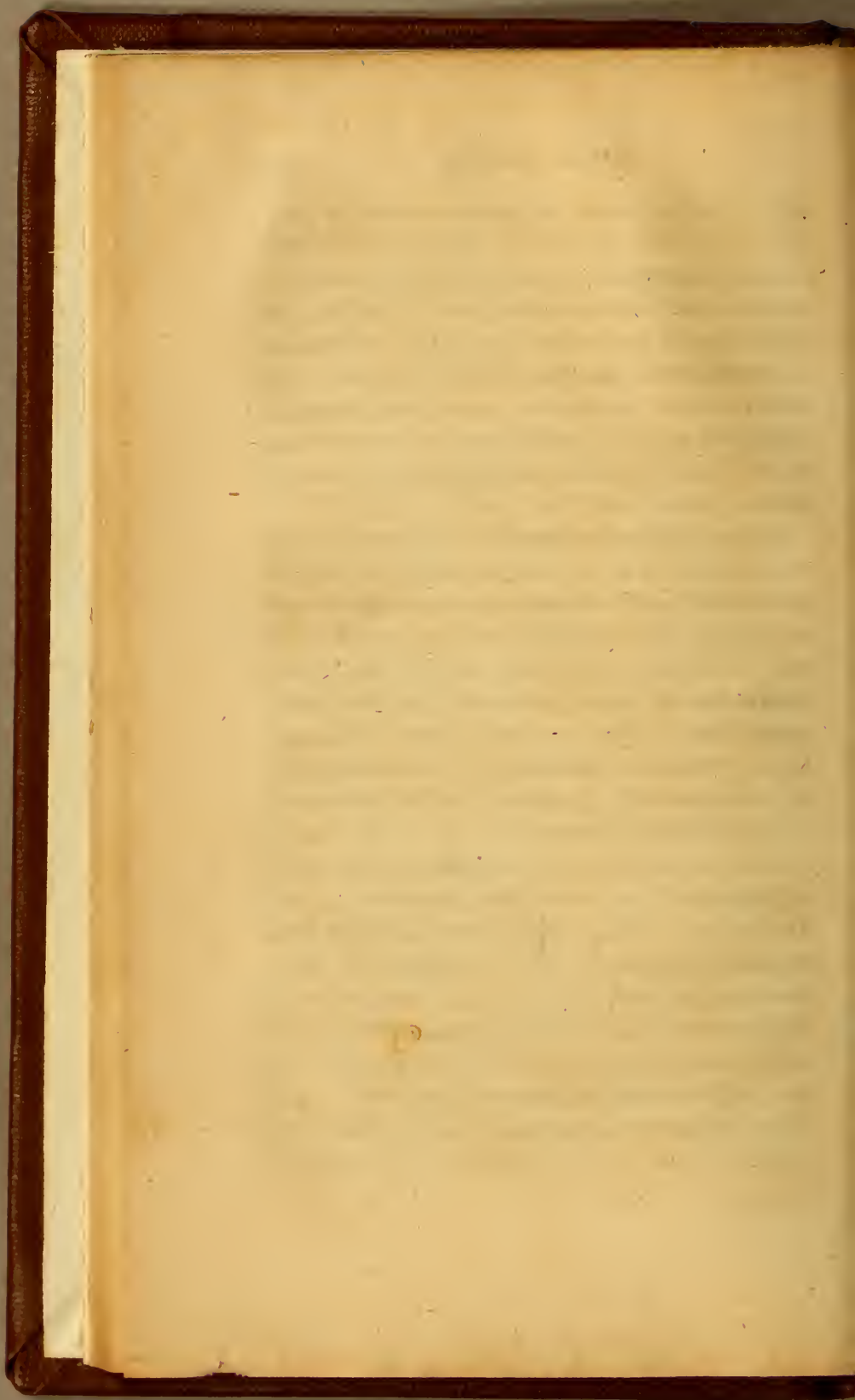
Although the vocabularies of voyagers, from being picked up among a people, who, destitute of fixed signs for language, must have a very indefinite pronounciation, yet I esteem the similitary observable between the Caraibe and oriental languages to be a striking proof of their being originally the same. If the curious reader will consult Rochefort's Caraibe Vocabulary, with the ancient oriental dialects, he will certainly acknowledge a very visible resemblance. And considering that the emigration of the Caraiques must have taken place many centuries ago, it is evident that no plainer likeness of words could have been kept up by nations so remote. The instances of resemblance are, at any rate, too numerous to suppose they originated in accident.

Herodotus tells us that the Lybian voyagers were wont to land on the coasts, and sow their corn. Such a practice must have occasioned disputes with the natives, who must have looked upon these intruders as vagabond plunderers. It is pretty singular that the name *Gharaib* has exactly this translation in Arabic.

It is no less worthy of observation, that the practice of gathering up the feet of the dead, which we are informed by Herodotus and Cicero was universally practised among the ancient nations, and which by the expression of scripture, "gathering up the feet of the dying," we know was a prevalent custom among the posterity of Abraham, was found to be still retained among the Caribes of the New World, who always buried their dead in this posture.

By the testimony of Moses, we learn, that grief for the loss of a much-loved friend made it an established part of the religious solemnities of eastern nations, to wound the flesh, and cut short the hair. The Jews, to be sure, were commanded to abstain from such a barbarous demonstration of grief; but the surrounding heathens still adhered to the practice. The American Caribbe expressed the violence of his grief for a departed friend, exactly in the same manner.

The well-known habit of eastern Indians chewing the *betele*, prepared with a mixture of calcined shells, is too striking a similarity to Caribbee manners to be omitted. Other instances of resemblance might be traced out; but, from the above illustration, it will appear plain, that if there be one conjecture more probable than another, as to the origin of the Caribbe Indians, it is this, "that they must have emigrated, at some period, from the East."





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## BOOK II.

### *JAMAICA.*

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#### CHAPTER I.

Discovery by Columbus—Proceedings of his Son, Diego, after Columbus's Decease—Takes Possession of Jamaica—The humane Character of Esquivel, the first Governor—Invasion of the Island by Sir Anthony Shirley and Colonel Jackson—Establishment and Desertion of the Town of Suilla Nueva—Destruction of the Indians—St. Jago de la Vega founded—Gives Title of Marquis to Diego's Son, Lewis; to whom the Island is granted—Descends to his Sister, Isabella—Reverts to the Crown of Spain.

JAMAICA was not discovered by Columbus till his second voyage to the New World. Columbus, it is well known, had returned to Spain, quite undecided whether Cuba was an island or a continent. On his return to Hispaniola, he set sail from thence, to ascertain the point; and, in this short voyage, descried at a distance the Blue Mountains of Jamaica. He accordingly came up to the island next day; and, after a very faint opposition from its inhabitants, took possession of it, with the usual form, in the name and authority of the King of Spain.

The origin of the name has been disputed ; but it is most probably of West Indian origin ; because the word is written, by the oldest Spanish authors, Xaymayco ; which signifies, in the language of the Indians, a country abounding in springs.

In his fourth and last voyage, this illustrious navigator was driven for shelter into a port of this island, after losing two ships of his fleet by tempestuous weather. On gaining this harbour (which, in honour of his name, was called St. Christopher's Cove), he found his ship so terribly damaged, as to prevent him from putting to sea. In this melancholy situation, his miseries were aggravated by every circumstance that treachery and barbarity could turn against him. His people revolted ; and, at their instigation, the natives also became his enemies. His brother and his son lay starving and dying beside him ; while, enfeebled with old age, and afflicted with the insupportable pains of the gout, without medicine, and without compassion, the greatest and worthiest man of the age was suffered to languish in affliction. In this situation, he wrote a letter to his sovereign ; which, being intercepted by his enemies, is still preserved in the records of Jamaica. It is replete with the expressions of a generous mind, conscious of the injustice of its sufferings ; and, I believe, would have melted the heart even of the ungrateful and besotted Ferdinand, had it been suffered to reach him. It is probable he might have languished to death upon this inhospitable shore, had not his well-

known device of terrifying the Indians, by the prediction of an eclipse, restored him to reputation and authority. He returned to Spain, but fell a martyr to the sensibility of his mind, which could not obliterate the remembrance of his former unmerited sufferings.

His son Diego, the heir of his fortune, continued his entreaties at the court of Spain for a long time; till at last, indignant at the falsehood of the king, he commenced a bold and unexpected process against his liege, Ferdinand, before the council of the Indies at Seville; and, by a decision equally unexpected, was constituted viceroy of all the countries discovered by his father, and entitled to the tenth part of the gold and silver found in these dominions. Diego, accordingly, was acknowledged by his sovereign to be viceroy of Hispaniola; for which settlement he sailed with a splendid retinue, and landed on the island in the month of July 1508.

Considering himself to be entitled, by the prior sentence of the Indian council, to nominate a governor of Jamaica, he sent thither, the following year, Juan de Esquivel, with seventy men. Esquivel was a brave soldier, and a generous man; as his behaviour to his rival, Ojeda, eminently displayed. Ojeda had been appointed (unlawfully indeed) by his sovereign to the government of Jamaica; and, at the time of Esquivel's arrival, being about to depart to the continent, he publicly threatened Esquivel, that he should be hanged



as a robber, if at any time found upon Jamaica. Ojeda, however, was unfortunate in his voyage; and, being shipwrecked on the coast of Cuba, was in danger of perishing for want. He had no resource but to beg from his enemy. Esquivel, on hearing his situation, sent for him, and received him with kindness. Their enmity was obliterated, and they became immutable friends.

Under this benevolent protector the islanders of Jamaica continued peaceable and happy. His administration was virtuous and gentle; while the cheerful inhabitants laboured in rearing cotton, and raising other valuable commodities.

It is to be lamented, however, that the reign of this illustrious governor was but for a few years; and, in all probability, his successors abandoned his example, to imitate the barbarities of those sanguinary men who were by this time spreading carnage among the natives of Hispaniola.

To this cause we may ascribe that complete extirpation of the Spaniards, which, beyond all doubt, took place at some period or other in this island.

The town of Sevilla Nueva (New Seville) had arisen to some consideration. Churches and fortifications had been erected, as we find by the testimony of Sloane, who inspected their ruins in 1688. This author informs us, that he discovered a pavement running to the distance of two miles from the sea; and as the town began close upon the beach, its size must have been considerable.

But unfortunately the triumph of the poor Indians was but of short duration. The Spaniards, it is probable, returned in greater numbers to their destruction; for, out of 60,000 natives who once possessed it, not an individual was found alive when the English took possession of Jamaica.

To this day, there are discovered in the mountains caves almost entirely covered with human bones. It is discovered by the skulls, which are preternaturally compressed, that these can be no other than the remains of the unfortunate aborigines, who, probably retiring from the swords of the Spaniards, perished for want in these solitary places.

Diego Columbus left three sons and two daughters. His eldest son, Don Lewis, at the expiration of his minority, finding his right to the viceroyalty of the West Indians disputed by the Emperor of Spain, commenced a lawsuit against the court as his father Diego had done. The matter came to a composition, by which Don Lewis agreed to be Duke of Veragua and Marquis of Vega, accepting Jamaica and Veragua, and renouncing all other claims. He died without issue, and his sister Isabella succeeded to all his rights. Owing to her marriage with the Duke of Gelvez, she gave over all her rights to the house of Braganza; so that in 1640, when John Duke of Braganza became King of Portugal, the Island of Jamaica reverted to the crown of Spain.

This sufficiently accounts for the influx of Por-

tuguese into Jamaica, which excited so much jealousy in the old Spanish settlers. It is probable, that from this irreconcilable aversion between the Spaniards and Portuguese, the English, under Sir Anthony Shirley, met with so little resistance in 1596, when they plundered the capital itself. Forty years after, it was invaded by a force from the Windward Islands, under Colonel Jackson; but on this occasion the inhabitants behaved with remarkable gallantry. Jackson was defeated, with the loss of forty men, at Passage Fort; and had not his activity, in entering the town of St. Jago de la Vega, enabled him to lay a contribution on the inhabitants, he would have been obliged to retreat from the island with neither credit nor plunder.

The most remarkable occurrence that we meet with in perusing the annals of Jamaica, is its invasion and capture by the English in 1655, during the protectorship of Cromwell, whose conduct in this point shall be considered in the next chapter,



## CHAPTER II.

Vindication of the Character of Cromwell against the Allegations of those Historians who blame him for attacking the Spaniards in the West Indies—The enormous Cruelties of that People described, in direct Violation of the Treaty of 1630—State of Jamaica on its Capture.

HISTORIANS of opposite political principles have united in censuring the conduct of Cromwell in his invasion of Jamaica. Mrs. M'Cauley terms his capture of the island "dishonourable and piratical," and Hume condemns it as "a most unwarrantable violation of treaty."

But if the candid inquirer will consult the State-Papers of Thurloe (the Secretary), he will find sufficient grounds to dissent from this severe sentence upon the Protector's conduct: He will find that Spain, by her prior behaviour, justly merited such an act of hostility; that Cromwell was not the aggressor, but the meritorious defender of his country. I shall adduce a few remarkable facts to support this assertion.

In 1630, three years prior to the Protector's usurpation, a treaty was concluded between Spain and England; by the first article of which it was stipulated, that there should be an amicable correspondence between the subjects of both kingdoms in all quarters of the globe. The circum-

stances which dictated this treaty were exceedingly urgent, as the Spaniards, previous to this time, had arrogantly assumed a monopoly of all communication with the New World, and under that pretence had committed the most unwarrantable barbarities upon all other navigators to the American seas, and the settlers of every other nation who inhabited West Indian possessions.

All Europe was insulted by this exorbitant assumption; but England was peculiarly provoked to exert her energy in maintaining her rights; for she had already colonized in Virginia, Bermudas, St. Christopher's, and Barbadoes; territories some of which Spain had not even discovered, and none of which she had ever occupied.

In 1629, the perfidy of the Spaniards was displayed in a very odious manner. Under colour of attacking the Dutch settlement in Brazil, they fitted out a squadron of twenty-four ships of force, and fifteen frigates, under the command of Don Frederic de Toledo. The admiral, however, was under secret orders to proceed, in the first place, to the Island of St. Christopher's, and extirpate from thence the French and English, who peaceably possessed it.

The Spanish force was too great to be resisted. The French planters fled to the Island of Antigua, and the English to the mountains. The latter offered to treat with their conquerors, but were forced to unconditional submission. Their inhuman invaders, therefore, selected six hundred of the

strongest Englishmen for the mines, drove the rest, with the women and children, from the island, reduced the island to a desert, and proceeded on their voyage.

The abovementioned treaty of 1630 did not put a stop to their enormities: eight years after the affair just related, they made a descent on the little Island of Tortuga, and put every man, woman, and child to the sword!

England would have avenged their deaths, but was at that time herself a blood-stained theatre of civil war; so that the merciless Spaniards proceeded in their career of guilt unmolested.

Santa Cruz was the next object of their depredation. In 1650 they acted again the same tragedy which they had exhibited at Tortuga, butchering even the helpless women and children. The place being made a desert, a colony of Dutch settled on it for some time, but, on the return of the Spaniards, were massacred in their turn. To fulfil the measure of their guilt, the very shipwrecked mariners of other nations, who were driven to their inhospitable shores, were condemned for life to labour in the mines of Mexico.

Numberless applications were, in consequence of these barbarities, presented to Cromwell, requiring him to retaliate upon Spain, and wrest from their cruelty and oppression those tracts of country to which they had no title but the arrogant donation of the Pope.

The most conspicuous of these applicants was a



brother of that Sir Henry Gage who was killed at Culham Bridge, in 1644; who pointed out the most probable means of succeeding, in depriving Spain of her West Indian possessions. The same ingenious author also published a book, entitled, "A New Survey of the West Indies," in which he handled the subject of the Spaniards exclusive right to these territories with great perspicuity.

Cromwell was roused to indignation by the representations he received of Spanish inhumanity, and determined upon acts of hostility. Spain endeavoured to avert the storm by the most paltry acts of negotiation; but the court of England was explicit, and declared a fixed resolution of continuing in peace, upon no other terms, than security for their possessions in the West Indies, and a modification of the horrors exercised by the inquisition.

The Spanish ambassador replied, that these demands were "*like asking his master's two eyes,*" and *could not be granted*. The Protector therefore prepared for war.

Hispaniola was the object of the expedition which was first concerted. The fleet was unsuccessful there; but accomplished their point in conquering Jamaica. The capture was made May 1655; but unfortunately Gage, who had planned the expedition, perished in its execution.

Not above fifteen hundred whites were found upon the island when the English took possession of it. A great tract of the eastward part of the country was covered with horses and horned cattle

in such abundance, that they ran wild in the country. For four months, the English soldiers amused themselves with shooting this extraordinary game, and slaughtered to the number of 20,000. This appears to me an almost incontestible proof of the assertion before advanced, that the country was at one period depopulated of its white inhabitants by the arms of the natives.

The sloth and penury of the Spanish planters, when the English landed, was extreme. Their principal export was hogs-lard, hides, and cocoa; a commerce no way more respectable than that which is carried on by the savages of Madagascar. They had almost no intercourse with Europe; they were ignorant and unrefined. The little work they had to do was managed by African slaves; so that, immersed in sloth and ignorance, their lives must have been spent in a gloomy state of degeneracy.

It must be confessed, however, that if they had degenerated from their fathers in activity and perseverance, they had also lost the ferocity and bigotry of the first conquerors of America.

Upon the whole, their character was such as to leave no shadow of excuse for the inhumanity exercised upon them by their English conquerors. The terms imposed upon them were, to surrender their slaves and effects, and quit the island. They turned from the proposals with indignation, and afterwards, by their desperate resistance to the English, showed the impolicy of provoking even the vanquished by severity and injustice.

## CHAPTER III.

Proceedings in the Island after its Capture—Discontents and Mortality among the Army—Exertions of the Protector—Brayne appointed to the Command—De Oyley re-assumes it—His Defeat of the Spanish Forces who invaded the Island of Cuba—Regular Government established in Jamaica—Disputes with the Mother Country, &c. &c.

JAMAICA having thus fallen into the hands of the English, it continued to be governed by military jurisdiction, till the Protector's death, and the subsequent restoration of Charles. Commissioners had been indeed left on the island, whose civil authority was intended to temper the rigour of martial law; but these having returned to England, the sole command devolved upon Fortescue commander of the army, and Goodson admiral of the fleet. Soon after Fortescue died; and Colonel De Oyley, next in command, succeeded to his authority as president of the military council. Such, indeed, was the situation of the English at that time, from the terrible incursions of the dispossessed Spaniards and fugitive Negroes, as to require the strictest discipline that martial law could enforce.

Cromwell, however, seemed bent upon maintaining his conquests. Encouragement was liberally held out to the inhabitants of the Windward Islands, as well as to the settlers in North America, to change their situation for settlements in Jamaica,



From fimilar offers, vaſt numbers were allured to emigrate both from Scotland and Ireland.

Meanwhile the foldiery in the iſland grew tired of their reſidence, idle, and licentious. They had employed themſelves at firſt in ſhooting down the ſcattered cattle of the Spaniards, like wild beaſts; and for a while lived profuſely. But the ſtock now began to grow exceedingly ſcanty, and no arguments could perſuade them to anticipate the danger of famine, by timeous application to raiſing proviſions. Deſirous of home, and apprehenſive that they were to be ſtationed for life in this intemperate climate, they reſolved to abſtain from ſupporting their own wants, that government might be tired with the expences of ſupplying them. But the conſequences of this reſolution were more fatal than expectation. The horrors of famine ſpread abroad; they were reduced to devour vile and unwholeſome animals, ſnakes, lizards, and every ſpecies of vermin; an epidemic diſeaſe ſoon became prevalent, and the miſerable coloniſts perished in thouſands,

The Protector falſely imagined, that the calamities of Jamaica were owing to the Governor De Oyley's want of attachment to his cauſe. This able commander was therefore recalled, and Colonel Brayne, from Lochaber, appointed in his place. Brayne ſet ſail from Scotland, and landed at Jamaica, December 1656. His firſt letter to England deſcribed, in ſtrong language, the miſerable diſtraction which prevailed in the colony: he

requested a supply of 5000l. for the purpose of erecting forts; and concluded, by lamenting that he found so few men upon the island "cordial to the business." But Brayne's projected improvements were not carried into execution under his government; for though a very sagacious, he was not a firm man. He soon seemed to become himself no way cordial in the business; he grew apprehensive about his health, returned to England, and died. Previous to his departure, however, he had nominated De Oyley his successor, and Cromwell, probably discerning his merit, ratified the appointment.

The succession of this gallant man to the government of Jamaica, proved the benefit of the rising colony. His soldiers, amid all their mutinous discontents, and manifold distresses, esteemed and admired his character; and, as will be immediately seen, manifested their attachment by the most signal intrepidity in protecting the island.

The governor of Cuba had learnt with satisfaction the discontents, the plague, and the famine, which had brought Jamaica to the very brink of ruin, and earnestly wished to avail himself of its miseries. Having therefore corresponded upon his intended invasion with the viceroy of Jamaica, he sent out Don Christopher Arnoldo, with thirty companies of infantry, to capture the place.

On the 8th of May the Spanish force landed at Rio Nuevo, and possessed the harbour. De Oyley, with 700 Englishmen, watched them by sea, stormed their fortifications, and drove them, with the loss

of colours, ammunition, and half their men, in disgrace from the island.

They turned from this victory to a labour less honourable, namely, the pursuit of those wretched Spaniards who, driven from their paternal properties, had still lurked in the mountains. These, after a vigorous stand, were at last overpowered, and the gleanings of them driven to their countrymen in Cuba.

The appearance of the colony now began to brighten. Agriculture was practised industriously at home, and their commerce became extensive abroad. Letters of marque being also granted to those extraordinary adventurers called Buccaneers, the immense Spanish prizes which they took were brought into the harbours of Jamaica, and by promoting a speedy circulation of wealth, stimulated the efforts of the industrious. The troubles which at that time agitated England, contributed not a little to increase the population of the place; especially in 1660, at the Restoration, when the friends of the late usurpation, apprehensive of Charles's resentment, sought for asylum among a people whom they knew to be adherents of Cromwell.

On the accession of Charles, the king, to conciliate the affections of the people, nominated their favourite De Oyley governor in chief, and releasing the people from military law, erected courts of judicature, and ordered them to be governed by an assembly elected by the people themselves.

These indulgencies from the crown, or rather this establishment of the natural rights of the inha-



bitants, was succeeded by the American treaty, concluded between Spain and Great Britain, which confirmed to the possessors of estates in Jamaica the entire right over their property. A surmise had arisen which insinuated, that as the capture of Jamaica was made under the auspices of the Protector, the right of the English was not valid. The vulgar opinion, that the Spaniards still pretend a right to dispossess the landed proprietors of Jamaica, is only a continuation of this error. The treaty signed at Madrid is, however, perfectly explicit on this subject, and formally cedes the West Indian possessions of the king of Britain "to his heirs for ever." It is well known, however, that Charles's propensity to diminish the liberty of his people grew very strong towards the last of his days. While he was busy, in concert with his ministers, in forming plans for the subversion of liberty at home, he did not lose sight of his possessions abroad. Accordingly, in the beginning of the year 1678, he began to open violation of the rights of the inhabitants of Jamaica. A constitution was framed, by the terms of which it was enacted, that all bills (money bills excepted) should be sufficiently valid, if they were suggested by the governor or his council, and sanctioned by his majesty; while the legislative assembly, elected by the people, had no other task than to meet and blindly ratify these arbitrary dictates of their governor and king.

The most probable cause of this unjust severity on the part of the British government, was the fire-

nuous refusal they had lately made to burden themselves with an enormous internal revenue of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to the crown, on the gross produce of the island. The Barbadians had meanly consented to impose this tax upon themselves and posterity, and ministers, disappointed to find that Jamaica did not follow their example, resolved to deprive the island of the blessings of freedom.

The assembly rejected the new constitution with indignation. Among other zealous patriots, Colonel Long, at that time chief judge of Jamaica, stood forward with undaunted fortitude in defence of his injured countrymen. Lord Carlisle the governor endeavoured to extinguish the spirit of liberty, by sending home, as a prisoner of state, this distinguished gentleman; but on his arrival at England, he pointed out, with so much energy and precision, the fatal tendency of those despotic laws which they meditated imposing on Jamaica, that government thought it convenient to abandon the measure, and appointed Colonel Long governor of Jamaica in the room of Lord Carlisle.

The contest between the mother country and her colony did not terminate here. The assembly still possessed the power of enacting decrees, but it required the concurrence of the crown to give these enactments the force of laws. Government seemed to consider their abandoning their former unjust pretensions to alter the constitution, as a positive favour, and greedily looked for some requital. Jamaica continued obstinate in refusing this gratuity, alleg-

ing, with propriety, that such a gift would be put by Charles to the most improper purposes : and the sovereign, to punish their contumacy, still refused assent to their decrees. Thus the laws of Jamaica continued for fifty years in a perplexed and undecided situation ; till at last a perpetual grant of 8000*l.* per annum mollified the temper of the king, and brought the matter to a compromise.

In 1687, Christopher Duke of Albemarle was created by James II. governor of this island. At no time did government assume a more tyrannical aspect than under this proud man's administration. We may judge of his general character by his behaviour in one assembly which he called. A patriotic member having exclaimed, "*Salus populi suprema lex ;*" the intolerant tyrant broke up the assembly in haste, took the gentleman into custody, and fined him 600*l.* for the heinous offence !

In 1692, the town of Port Royal was swallowed up by a tremendous earthquake. The inhabitants were hardly recovering from its terrors, when they were alarmed by the rumours of invasion.

In June 1694, Monsieur De Casse appeared off Cow Bay. and landed 800 men, who had orders to ravage the country as far as Port Morant. The soldiers obeyed their orders with strictness, inhumanly butchering and destroying wherever they went. De Casse on their return sailed round to Carlisle Bay, which was feebly defended by 200 militia. He was upon the point of proceeding upwards to ravage the country, after forcing these defenders of the breast-



work to retire, when five companies of militia arrived from Spanish Town. These hardy troops, though they had marched thirty miles without refreshment, charged the enemy with vigour, and drove them to their ships with their ingloriously acquired plunder,

## CHAPTER IV.

Situation—Climate—Face of the Country—Mountains, and Advantages derived from them—Soil—Uncultivated Lands—Woods—Rivers—Ore—Vegetables—Kitchen Garden produce and Fruits.

JAMAICA is situated in the Atlantic Ocean, about four thousand miles southwest of England. It has the Island of Hispaniola to the east, Cuba to the north, the Gulf of Honduras to the west, and the great continent of South America to the south.

The centre of Jamaica is about  $18^{\circ} 12'$  north latitude, and  $76^{\circ} 45'$  west longitude from London. The reader will readily perceive, that a country so situated must be almost invariably hot, during all the seasons of the year; that the twilight will be short, and the difference in the length of days and nights inconsiderable.

As you ascend up the country from the northern shores of Jamaica, the eye is charmed with the gentle swell of the hills, and the spacious vales that lie between them. The dark green woods of pimento, so beautifully disposed upon these mountains, forms a delightful contrast to the fresh verdure of the turf below. From the nature of the pimento tree, the forests are not entangled with underwood; and from the nature of the soil, the grass is as smooth and soft as an English lawn. To gratify at once the ear and

the eye, a refreshing rivulet wanders through every valley, and a cascade dashes from every mountain. The view of these cataracts gleaming from the mountains, which overhang the shore, is peculiarly delightful to the thirsty voyager, who has long wished for land.

As you approach the centre of the island, an immensity of forests presents the view which melts into the distant Blue Hills, and these again are lost in the clouds.

In approaching the island from the south side, the eye is rather astonished than delighted, when the huge precipices, abruptly mingling with the sky, at first present themselves. As you come nearer you discern the hand of culture enlivening the scene, and the flowing line of the lower range of mountains becomes apparent. At length you gain a prospect of the wide spreading savannahs, plains only bounded by the ocean, and displaying in one landscape the verdure of spring and the richness of autumn; while the sails of numberless vessels upon the distant main, complete the diversified beauty of the prospect.

In attending to these majestic swellings of the ground from the level of the country, we ought to remark with gratitude the singular benefits which they serve. In ascending these heights, the traveller feels it a sensible pleasure to escape from the heat below, to the purer regions of the atmosphere. On these higher grounds the thermometer changes many de-



grees ; in many places the inconvenience of a tropical latitude is hardly felt.

Jamaica is one hundred and fifty miles in length, and, at a medium, forty miles in breadth. It is thus computed (supposing it a level country) to give 3,840,000 of acres ; but since the superficies of a mountain is greatly larger than its base, I would compute the total at 4,080,000 acres.

By returns made in November 1789, it was found, that out of all this tract of ground, not more than 1,907,589 acres were in a state of cultivation: the expence of obtaining patents from the crown being thought more than the profit, which could accrue from cultivation of new lands.

By the latest returns, we find the number of sugar plantations on the island to be 710. Allowing 900 acres to each of these (of which one third is reserved for firewood and common pasturage), the number of acres under that species of cultivation will be 639,000. Of pens or breeding farms there are 400 ; allowing to each of which 700 acres, the amount is 280,000. About one half of that number may be allowed to pimento, cotton, coffee, and ginger, which makes the sum total of acres 1,059,000. The overplus of uncultivated land is 3,000,000 of acres, of which not above one fourth, I believe, is fit for cultivation, the rest being inaccessible ridges.

The productions of these uncultivated mountains are, however, not without their use. Of the harder species of wood, they produce in abundance lignum-vitæ, logwood, iron-wood, and bully trees. Of the

softer kinds, wild-lemon tree, bread-nut and mahogany. When the situation of the land enables a proprietor to export these varieties of timber, the profit is considerable; but in the upland countries, the new settler finds it his interest to apply the torch to his forests, and clear his land instantaneously.

Of their rivers, none are sufficiently deep to be navigable, although there are above an hundred in the island. Black River in St. Elisabeth, indeed, admits flat bottomed boats and canoes: it is a gently flowing water. The most remarkable of their springs is that in the eastern parish of St. Thomas, flowing from a rock, and of a heat intolerable to the touch. It is of a sulphureous quality; peculiarly adapted to alleviate that dreadful complaint, called the *dry belly-ache*.

Ancient writers assert that gold and silver might be abundantly found in the island; and indeed, in many places, the aspect of the soil confirms the assertion; but the present inhabitants are perhaps better employed, than in the pursuit of these highly valued resources.

Sugar, indigo, coffee, and cotton are the most important of their productions. Of these we shall in future give a minute account; but proceed at present to make remarks on those other classes of vegetables, which, though unfit for commerce, minister to their comfortable subsistence. Maize, or Indian corn, produces a double crop: it is planted whenever there is rain, and yields about thirty bushels per acre. Guinea corn, planted in September and

gathered in January, yields about fifty bushels per acre. Various kinds of calavances (a sort of pea) are also produced; and lastly, rice, but to no extent: the labour of negroes being thought to be unprofitably applied in its cultivation.

The island produces abundance of grass, both indigenous and extraneous. The species which is generally called *Scots grass*, has been by some esteemed an herb of foreign origin; but I am fully persuaded, from its spontaneous growth in the swamps, and desert places of Jamaica, that it is truly a native of the island. It has a long jointed stalk, that grows to the height of five or six feet. Fifty-six pounds of it will feed a horse for a day; so that by computation an acre will support six horses for a twelvemonth.

The other species of grass is by far the most important; for, to the importation of this herb into the island, we may ascribe the origin of those innumerable breeding farms, which now cover the face of Jamaica. The introduction of this grass was merely accidental: a Mr. Ellis, chief justice of the island, had been presented with some extraordinary birds, and some grass seeds of this kind were sent from the Coast of Guinea as their food. The birds happened to die, and the seeds were thrown carelessly aside into a neighbouring fence; but soon springing up and flourishing, they attracted the cattle by their flavour. Mr. Ellis fortunately took notice of the propensity of his cattle to this new species of grass: he accordingly collected, and sowed the seeds of it, which thriv-



ing in a short time, became an universal blessing to the country.

European garden-stuffs flourish here, even with a superior flavour to those of their indigenous climate; and the markets of Kingston are as well supplied with esculent vegetables as any in the world. The native vegetables of the country are, perhaps, more wholesome and delicious than those of foreign growth. No vegetables can surpass, for the purposes of domestic use, the yam, the plantain, the eddoes, cassavi, and sweet potatoes. Indeed, the plantain is by Europeans and natives confessed to be superior to bread itself.

Their more elegant fruits are both numerous and delightful. No country can boast of more fragrant productions than the pine apple, the tamarind, the papa, the guava, the cashew apple, the custard apple, the cocoa nut, the star apple, the grenadilla, the avocado pear, the hog plum, the pindal nut, the nesbury, the mammée, Spanish gooseberry, and prickly pear. From Spain I believe were imported the orange, the lemon, the lime, the vine, the shaddock, the fig, and the pomegranate. England has contributed but a small share to their stock; the strawberry imported thence will only come to perfection in a high mountainous situation.

It would be injustice to the merits of Lord Rodney to omit mentioning, that the mango, the genuine cinnamon, and several other invaluable oriental plants, were presents from his Lordship. Having found these plants on board a French ship which

accidentally fell in his way, he generously sent them to Jamaica.

The cinnamon is now almost a native plant of the island; and the mango is as common as the orange.

## CHAPTER V.

Topographical Description—Towns, Villages, and Parishes—  
Church—Livings, Vestries—Governor, or Commander in Chief—  
Courts of Judicature—Public Offices—Coins—Militia—Inha-  
bitants—Trade—Shipping—Exports—Imports.

**J**AMAICA is divided into three counties ; Cornwall, Middlesex, and Surrey.

Middlesex has eight parishes, and thirteen villages. The chief town is Spanish Town, where the governor resides, and where the chancery and supreme court of judicature are convened.

Cornwall contains three towns, and five parishes. The most distinguished of its towns are on the north side ; viz. Montego Bay, and Falmouth. The latter was, as late as 1771, composed of only eighteen houses, and possessed a shipping of only ten vessels. Its progress, however, since that time, has been very rapid, as it now contains two hundred and twenty houses, and upwards of thirty large ships, besides inferior craft.

Montego Bay contains two hundred and fifty houses, and six hundred white inhabitants. It is a rich and prosperous town, with a shipping of considerable extent.

Savannah la Mar was once almost entirely shaken to ruins by an earthquake ; but is now rebuilt to the extent of about seventy houses.



It sometimes happens that, for the sake of convenience, two or more of these parishes are consolidated into one : these, like the single parishes, are governed by a magistrate who is called *Custos Rotulorum*, and justices of the peace. A quorum of these justices can decide upon disputes not exceeding twenty pounds ; and a single one, upon matters not exceeding forty shillings.

Jamaica contains eighteen churches and chapels, each of which is provided with a rector. The livings of these are from 300l. to 2000l. per annum : the incumbent also enjoys a house and glebe provided by the parish ; or else is entitled to an equivalent of fifty pounds a-year. The addition of the glebe makes the salary very comfortable. The governor, as representative of his majesty, has the patronage of all these livings ; he has also the prerogative of suspending from duty, in case of mal-behaviour in the incumbent. It must be observed, that suspension from duty is equivalent to suspension from the benefice.

The vestries, which are composed of a custos and some justices, the rector and ten vestry-men elected by the freeholders, have the sole power of appropriating taxes, repairing highways, and collecting the civil and ecclesiastical contributions.

Similar to the English courts of judicature, is held at Spanish Town an assembly called the Grand Court. It is composed of gentlemen of the island, who act as assistant judges without fee or reward. Three of these constitute a quorum, and the chief justice of

the island sits as president \*. If the action they have decided upon be above 300*l.* an appeal lies to the governor and his council ; if the case be felony or death, to the governor alone.

By an ingenious mode of arranging the periods of their assizes, the inhabitants have a law court regularly every month in the year. In addition to these, they have the chancery court, the ordinary, and the admiralty. No appeal can be had from the supreme court to that of the assizes, but the decisions in the assize court, coming as the immediate consequents of the other, both these decisions are considered as the determination of one body.

The governor of Jamaica presides as sole chancellor, from the nature of his office. In addition to this vast source of emolument and influence, he is ordinary for granting letters of administration, and is the sole officer for the probate of testaments. His salary is exactly 5000*l.* currency a-year : from the fees of various courts he draws an emolument of 2550*l.* : from the farm which is allotted to his use, and the polink, or provision in the mountains, which is, like the former usufruct, plentifully stored with negroes, he should enjoy 1000*l.* So that his whole revenue must be paramount to 6000*l.* Sterling ; and it is well known the expences of his station may be genteelly defrayed upon one half of that sum.

The office of enrolments is held uniformly at Spanish Town. In this register the laws are kept in re-

\* The Governor's income, perquisites included, amounts to about 3000*l.* per annum.

cord, as likewise wills, deeds, patents, and sales. It is necessary that every person who has staid six weeks on the island should obtain a passport from this court before he quits the island ; and shipmasters are debarred, by a penalty of a thousand pounds, from admitting any one on board their vessels unprovided with such a pass. Guardians of orphans and possessors of mortgages are also obliged to register here the annual produce of the estates under their tuition.

The profits of this office are held by his Majesty's patent ; their amount cannot be less than 6000*l.* per annum, but the labour of the business is performed by clerks cheaply hired.

It was mentioned in a former part of the book, that Jamaica was, at that period, under military law. Accordingly we find the remains of this species of authority in the office of provost-marshal-general, a office of high rank and considerable prerogative. He holds his office from the crown, his powers and authorities are various, and he has the power of appointing deputies over the whole island.

The office of clerk of the supreme court is in like manner held by a crown patent, and performed by deputation. It was at one period worth 9000*l.* currency, though now diminished in value.

There are numberless other offices of a very lucrative nature, held both by a patent and commission, and executed by deputation ; which remit to the possessors in Great Britain not less than the sum of 30,000*l.*



The legislative body is composed of a captain-general, or commander in chief; a council of twelve appointed by the crown; and a house of assembly, consisting of forty-three members. It is requisite that every elector possess a freehold of 10l. a-year; and that the representative possess an estate of 3000l. a-year, or 3000l. of personal property. As soon as a bill has obtained the governor's assent, it passes into law, and continues to be held as such till the royal disapprobation be expressed.

The main object of enacting such laws is to suit those local circumstances to which the law of England cannot be applied \*. Where the English system will in part apply, but is found inconvenient, it has been altered and modified to suit their pleasure.

The revenues of the island are either annual or perpetual; the latter revenue, as was before mentioned, was yielded up as a peace-offering to the British government; the former is granted as a yearly allowance by the assembly.

The whole product of the revenue law may be 12,000l. The annual revenue may amount at present to 70,000l. It must be remarked, that the humane provision which is allotted to the military resident in this island requires a great proportion of this sum; every commissioned officer being allowed 20s. per week, besides his majesty's pay, and every private 5s. The wives and children of the

\* Thus in points regarding the slave-trade.

foldiers are also entitled to a share of this provision. The sum expended on these purposes is about 40,000*l*.

Besides occasional supplies voted by the assembly, as necessity requires, there is a regularly raised tax on negroes imported, and negroes kept as slaves, wheel carriages, stock, spirits retailed and consumed, and lastly, a tax (the most productive of any) of 13*l*. or sometimes 26*l*. per annum, on all those proprietors of slaves who do not keep one white man for every thirty blacks in their possession.

The current coins in Jamaica are half johannes, valued in England at 36*s*. each, here at 55*s*. Of Spanish gold coins they have doubloons, valued at 5*l*. 5*s*. and pistoles at 26*s*. 3*d*. They have Spanish silver coins, from the milled dollar at 6*s*. 8*d*. to the bitt at 5*d*. Sterling. A guinea passes for 32*s*. 6*d*. This, however, is considerably more than the usual rate of exchange, by which 100*l*. Sterling gives 140*l*. currency.

The situation of Jamaica requires a powerful militia; and accordingly, in strictness of law, every man from fifteen to sixty ought to carry arms, and provide his clothes and accoutrements. This law is not, however, very exactly observed; for they do not, in times of the greatest danger, muster more than 7000 effective troops.

The bulk of the people of Jamaica are unmarried men; for Europeans come here not to get families, but to acquire riches. From this circumstance it is difficult to state, with preciseness, the number of white men in the whole island. By a computation

made in 1780, their number was estimated at 25,000.

A number of loyal Americans have since fixed themselves in Jamaica; so that, including troops and seafaring people, their number may probably amount to 30,000.

Of the freed negroes and people of colour, there are, upon an average, 500 in each parish. Maroons (those negroes who fought for their freedom, and after obtaining it, retired to the interior of the island), have certainly increased in their numbers very much of late. In 1770, they amounted to 885; their number, by the latest computation, is advanced to 1400.

The negroes still in a state of slavery amounted, at the last made calculation, to 210,894. It has been made to appear, however, pretty probable, that from the fraudulent concealment of possessors, not less than 40,000 have been kept out of the calculation. The total number, therefore, of the inhabitants of Jamaica (at the nearest calculation) amounts to 291,400.

The trade of this island will be best understood from the following list of the number of vessels of all kinds, which cleared from the several ports of entry in Jamaica in the year 1787, exclusive of smaller craft.



	Number of Veffels.	Tonnage.	Men.
For Great Britain -	242	63,471	7748
Ireland -	10	1231	91
American States	133	13,041	893
British American } Colonies	66	6133	449
Foreign West Indies	22	1903	155
Africa -	1	109	8
Total -	474	85,888	9344

It must be observed, however, that great part of many articles in the preceding account are brought into Jamaica from the other islands, and are paid in British manufactures and negroes. By the same medium, quantities of bullion are imported into Britain, of which no precise account can be procured.

The account of imports into Jamaica will stand thus :

# WEST INDIES.

77

the 5th of January 1788; with the aue in Sterling Money, according to the Prices then cur-  
rent at the London Market.

To what PARTS.	Sugar.		Rum. Gallons.	Melaffes. Gallons.	Pimento.		Coffee.		Cotton Wool.		Indigo. lbs.
	Cwt.	qrs.			lbs.	lbs.	Cwt.	qrs.	lbs.	lbs.	
To Great Britain	824706	2	25	1890540	2316	606904	3706	3	27	1899967	27223
Ireland	6829	0	0	106900	—	2803	10	0	0	5500	400
American States	6167	0	0	327125	1800	6450	2566	0	2	—	—
Br. Amer. Colonies	2822	0	0	207060	2300	200	110	3	8	1000	—
Foreign W. Indies	24	0	0	2200	—	—	2	0	0	—	—
Africa	—	—	—	8600	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	840548	2	25	2543025	6416	616444	6395	3	9	1906467	27623

(Continued.)

To what PARTS.	Ginger.		Cacao.		Tobacco.		Mahogany.		Logwood.		Miscellaneous Articles.		Total Value.
	Cwt.	qrs. lbs.	Cwt.	qrs. lbs.	lbs.	Tons.	Cwt.	Tons.	Value.	Value.			
To Great Britain	3553	2 15	82	3 15	18140	5783 4	6791	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Ireland	918	0 0	—	—	—	95 0	—	—	147286	3 4	2022814	7 10	0
American States	339	0 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25778	10 0	0
Br. Amer. Colonies	4	0 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	60095	18 0	0
Foreign W. Indies	2	0 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26538	2 5	0
Africa	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	355	19 0	0
Totals	4816	2 15	82	3 15	18140	5878 4	6791	—	—	—	12136442	17 3	0

It is possible, that this account may not be entirely exact ; and that the surplus arising from the excess of exports may be more or less than here stated ; but since the final profit centres in the mother country, this is a point of little importance. To show the propriety of this conclusion, let us attend to an extract of a report made by the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, in the year 1734.

“ The yearly amount of exports to Jamaica is, at a medium of four years, 147,675*l.* 2*s.* 3¼*d.* In the same time, the medium of imports is 539,499*l.* 18*s.* 3½*d.*; the excess of imports is therefore 391,824*l.* 15*s.* 11¼*d.* But this excess is not a debt from Jamaica to Britain ; most of it must be put to the account of goods sent to the Spanish West Indies, whose return is made by way of Jamaica ; another to the debt of Jamaica to African trades for slaves ; and a third to North America, who gives, in part payment of British debts, consignments from Jamaica, produced by her supplies to that island. The remainder is clear profit made upon our trade, whether by the medium of Africa, or directly.”

The mention of the Spanish West Indies leads me naturally to give an account of the trade which subsisted between Jamaica and these islands, and which is in fact still carried on.

About the beginning of the present century, this trade was so beneficial to Britain as to cause an annual sale of British goods, to the amount of 1,500,000*l.* in value. Spain, more anxious to encourage ex-



ports from her own harbours, than to promote the good of her colonies, ordered her subjects in the West Indies to accept of no other manufactures than those of the mother country; although she was evidently unfit to provide them with any tolerable proportion of the articles they required. The colonists, sensible of this circumstance, kept up a contraband commerce with the English, whom they guided with their own vessels into those sequestered harbours, most fit for conducting secret trade. In return for the articles thus imported, the Spaniards imported into the British West India islands other articles every way as requisite for their convenience, viz. horned cattle, mules, horses, and bullion. This return of commodities on the part of the Spaniards, was in fact inconsistent with the navigation act; but the British government, more sincere to the interest of her colonies than the court of Spain, declined the punishment of this beneficial deviation from the law. The British minister, however, in 1764. discontinued this indulgence; and, adhering to the rigour of the navigation laws, ordered all Spanish vessels in our West Indian ports to be confiscated. This was completely gratifying the wishes of Spain; but it did a very serious injury to our own colonies; for, in the year following, the exports to Jamaica fell short 168,000*l.* Sterling. A succeeding ministry, it is true, restored the former indulgence; but the matter coming to the ears of Spain, they endeavoured to counteract the measure, by laying an opener trade than formerly to her West India islands, by which

the temptation to English commerce might cease. Still, however, it is probable that the superiority of British manufactures would have secured them a market, if the ports of Dominica and Jamaica had not been laid open to all foreign vessels. By this means the jealousy of the Spaniards was alarmed; they procured by some secret means a copy of the register which was kept at the British free ports, of all persons in Spain concerned in the illicit trade. These were made immediate victims of public revenge, and subjected to the most deplorable cruelties. Britain recalled the orders for opening the ports when it was too late; for the Spaniards had too much cause to decline any farther connection. A contraband trade, however, is still kept up to the Spanish islands by such vessels as can elude the vigilance of the guarda costas.

With regard to the propriety of the free port bill, there are many arguments in its favour. It is true, that, upon pretence of entering the ports with lawful commodities, many of the smaller vessels might run up the unfrequented creeks, and distribute contraband articles; such as French cambrics, wines, brandy, &c. Admitting it to be the case, that the partial commerce of Jamaica might have been injured by these practices; still they must have benefited the empire at large, as the indigo and cotton, imported through the medium of foreign commerce, are articles so essentially necessary to British manufactures. These views powerfully affected the House of Commons, when, in 1774, they ordained the

trade to be free, by an act which is still continued. Indeed, the most forcible argument urged on the subject, was, that the free ports would thus become a market for the African slaves, who would be brought in by the owners through the temptation of having ready money for their cargoes.

An illustration of the truth of this remark was very signally displayed, when the Spanish Asiento Company having obtained permission to purchase slaves from the neighbouring islands, applied for that purpose to Jamaica. The British government, willing to encourage the traffic, took off the exportation poll-tax upon negroes; and the result was, that for the next ten years the import of slaves exceeded that of the ten former by 22,000 and odds.

Having thus briefly described the trade and commerce of Jamaica, we proceed to give a short account of its progress in cultivation for a century past.

As far back as 1673, we find the island contained 7000 whites, and 9000 negroes. Its chief productions were, at that time, cacao, indigo, and hides. About this period the manufacture of sugar was begun. As late as 1722, no more than 11,000 hogsheads of this article were produced.

In 1734, the island contained about 7000 whites, 86,000 negroes, and 76,000 head of cattle. Its imports to Britain were then valued at 539,499l. 18s. 3½d. Sterling.

In 1744, the whites amounted to 9000, the ne-



groes to 112,000, and the cattle to 88,000. The exports were now valued at 600,000*l.* Sterling.

In 1768, the whites were supposed to have been 17,000, the negroes 166,000, and the value of exports at 1,400,000*l.* Sterling.

In all parts of Jamaica cultivation was now making a rapid progress; and in 1787, the sum total of exports was allowed by the inspector-general to amount to 2,000,000*l.* Sterling.

Early in the following year, the unnatural war between the mother country and America broke out; and the guiltless inhabitants of the island felt its baneful effects to a terrible degree. Above all their other calamities, five hurricanes, which came in the space of seven years, contributed to spread the general destruction. It must be acknowledged, however, with gratitude, that since the period of the last hurricane in 1786, the seasons and crops have been exceedingly bountiful.

In computing the value of the island, we may estimate the value of the slaves at 50*l.* Sterling each; in all 12,500,000*l.* The landed and personal property, at 25,000,000*l.* The houses and property in the towns, and the shipping, at 1,500,000*l.* more; so that the whole amount of the island may be fairly stated at 39,000,000 of British money.

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## BOOK III.

### *ENGLISH CHARAIBEE ISLANDS.*

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#### CHAPTER V.

##### *BARBADOES.*

First Arrival of the English on this Island—Origin, Progress, and Termination of the Proprietary Government—Revenue granted to the Crown—Origin of the Act of Navigation—Situation and Extent of the Island—Soil and Produce—Population—Its Decline—Exports and Imports.

PREVIOUS to the year 1600, it does not appear that Barbadoes was at all observed in geography. The Charaibes, for reasons which we cannot understand, had abandoned it; and the Portuguese, who discovered it probably on some voyage to South America, bestowed no more care upon it than to stock it with swine.

The crew of the Olive Blossom (a ship fitted out from London, by Sir Olive Leigh) were the first English who ever landed on Barbadoes. They made, however, but a short stay, and proceeded

on their voyage, stored with the provisions they had found on the island.

A ship of Sir William Courteen's afterwards was driven upon it by stress of weather; and the report which they made of it in England induced the treasurer, Earl Marlborough, to obtain a crown patent for possessing it. Under the patronage of Marlborough, Courteen engaged about thirty adventurers who agreed to make a settlement on the place. Furnished with provisions, tools, and every thing requisite for a new colony, they set sail from England; and landing on Barbadoes late in the year 1624, founded the city of James Town, in honour of the reigning sovereign.

Among the numerous persons of rank who about this period engaged with ardour in the business of colonizing the New World, the most distinguished was James Earl of Carlisle. In the reign of Charles I. this nobleman had obtained from the Crown a grant of all the Charaibee Islands; Barbadoes being included in the number. The grant was no sooner issued out, than it occasioned a dispute between Marlborough (undoubtedly the legal possessor) and the new patentee Carlisle. Their contest ended in this agreement, that Carlisle should pay 300*l.* per annum to Marlborough, and that the other should abandon his claim.

Marlborough, on patching up this treaty with his rival in possession, immediately deserted his friend Courteen, who was now exposed to the injustice of Carlisle. It was in vain that in Carlisle's absence



from the kingdom, the Earl of Pembroke embarked in his interests, and procured for Courteen, as his second in title, a grant of Barbadoes by patent. The inconstant monarch, upon Carlisle's return, could not resist the request of his favourite, recalled the last patent, and restored the former. Carlisle thus possessed of the island, sold it in parcels; and sending out Charles Woolferstone as manager, and Sir William Tufton as governor of the new colony, obliged Courteen and his friends to submit to his authority.

But the conduct of Tufton displeasing Lord Carlisle, a governor of the name of Hawley was sent out to displace him. His first exertion of power was to condemn Tufton his predecessor to be shot, upon pretence that the remonstrances he made to the appointment of a new governor were acts of disobedience and mutiny. The indecent hurry and shocking injustice of his execution, excited the indignation of every person in the island. But the people were indignant to no purpose; Hawley, with all his crimes on his head, was protected at the court of England, and sent back with renovated authority to the government of the island. Here he remained odious to the inhabitants, till at last he was unable to resist the public indignation; and, after a disgraceful reign, was driven from the country. Several governors succeeded him, who seem to have studied with some attention the introduction of just and wholesome laws; but the impressions of disgust

at the proprietor still continued so strong, that his authority grew gradually weaker.

The civil war at home now broke out, and numberless emigrants crowded to Barbadoes. Such was the wonderful increase in the space of twenty years, that in 1680, 10,000 white men, and a regiment of cavalry, could turn out in defence of the island.

The new adventurers did not use the ceremony of purchasing their grounds, but planted wherever they thought proper; so that the proprietor's authority, and title to payments, was at last tacitly deserted. In 1646, when their prosperity began to attract public admiration, the son of the patentee put in his claims. He was supported by the Earl of Willoughby, who stipulated for one half of the profits, and a lease of the island for 21 years. He strengthened this bargain by obtaining the government of the place. He was graciously received by the inhabitants, and would have probably succeeded in levying the general tribute, at one time granted by the planters; but nine years before his lease was expired, Cromwell's usurpation had taken place, and he was of consequence dismissed from his authority.

At the Restoration he applied for a renewal of his authority, and the Earl of Marlborough being dead, the Earl of Kinnoul, his successor, made a joint application for his share of the profits. The inhabitants by this time perceiving that the intention of these claimants at home was only to prey upon the wealth of Barbadoes, remonstrated with great freedom upon the hardship they were likely to suffer,

in being burdened with payments to those men who had been exposed to no expence in colonizing their island.

While the matter was discussed in the privy council, some gentlemen of Barbadoes, who had been delegated by the planters there to plead with his Majesty in their behalf, offered to compromise the matter, by paying an annual rent to the king. Charles was *graciously* pleased to grasp at the proposal; but the Barbadians, on understanding the offer which had been made, disclaimed all willingness to pay such a tax, and denied that their representatives had any right to propose it.

This occasioned a new difficulty in deciding the contest. At last a determination was made, equally oppressive and unjust to the inhabitants of Barbadoes. Lord Willoughby was ordered immediately to assume the government of the island; and it was passed into a law, that an eternal revenue of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. should be exacted in specie from all dead commodities, the growth of the island, shipped into any part of the world.

The whole of this revenue was at last to revert to the crown; but in the mean time a proper allowance was to be made to the Earl of Kinnoul, Lord Carlisle's creditors, and Lord Willoughby.

Among the gentlemen of Barbadoes who vehemently opposed this unjust imposition, Colonel Farmer took a leading share. But his patriotic endeavours were baffled by the despotism of the court. He was arrested on pretence of mutiny, sent in



chains to England, and kept in tedious confinement. The persecution of this man overawed the other opposers of the law, and the Barbadians were thus compelled to submit to a tax, which is to this day injurious and oppressive.

Lord Clarendon, who had been the principal hand in advising his Majesty to this unjust measure, was indeed afterwards brought to account for it by the British parliament; but those who sought the destruction of Clarendon had other objects in view than the relief of Barbadoes, so that after the criminality of the tax was admitted, its rigour was not modified.

In 1680, Colonel Dutton, on his arrival at Barbadoes, informed the council and assembly, that his Majesty was willing to commute the tax for an equivalent sum of money. It was therefore proposed to farm the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for eleven years, for the annual rent of 6000*l.* Sterling; but the offer, upon examination, being judged too moderate, the proposal was rejected, and the tax continued.

But an imposition still harder than the former was laid upon Barbadoes, by the passing of the navigation act. This celebrated law had been made by the parliament after the death of Charles I. partly in revenge for the detestation which the Barbadians had expressed for the death of their sovereign, and partly with a view to prevent the Dutch, to whom the English were at that time very hostile, from having any further communication with our West India islands.

On the 16th of October 1651, Ayscue, who commanded the Parliament's forces, arrived at Barbadoes. He speedily reduced the whole island, and obliged them to submit, among other articles, to this enactment of the Commonwealth, viz. that no foreign ship should trade with the English plantations, and that no goods should be imported into England or its dependencies in any but English vessels, or in ships of that European nation of which the merchandise imported was the produce. Thus arose the famous navigation act, which, as it had been evidently inflicted upon the colonies in the way of a punishment, the Barbadians were not a little surprised to see continued under the reign of Charles II. a monarch to whom they had been attached so much, to their own detriment. Whether this ingratitude on the part of Charles was productive or not of bad consequences to the population and happiness of the place, will be seen hereafter.

Barbadoes lies  $13^{\circ} 10'$  north latitude, and in  $59^{\circ}$  west longitude from London. On the south it is fronted by the mouth of the Oroonoko, on the west by St. Lucia, and St. Vincent's, and on the north and east it is bounded by the Atlantic. The island has different sorts of moulds, but the black is the most favourable. By the aid of manure it yields sugar only inferior to that of St. Kitts.

As far back as the year 1670, we are informed that Barbadoes possessed 50,000 white, and twice

as many black inhabitants; and that it gave employment to 60,000 tons of shipping \*.

Even allowing that this statement may have been somewhat exaggerated, there is sufficient evidence that the inhabitants have rapidly declined. In 1786, the numbers were no more than 16,000 whites, 800 people of colour, and 62,000 negroes.

The produce of sugar has kept pace with the decline of population. We are informed, that in 1761, the average crop of sugar was 25,000 hogsheds. On an average calculation from 1784 to 1786, the exports of sugar did not exceed 9554.

The hurricanes, it must be confessed, which have been so fatal and frequent within these last twelve years, have contributed their share to the decline both of commerce and of population. The storm which took place on the 10th of October 1780, in particular, swept away no less than 4326 of its inhabitants.

\* The earliest planters of Barbadoes were accused of decoying away the Americans of the neighbouring continent into slavery. The Spectator has handed down, to the execration of posterity, the history of Yarico's being sold to slavery by the ungrateful Inkle. It may not be disagreeable to the reader, who has sympathized with poor Yarico, to hear that she bore her hard usage with a better grace than might have been expected. Ligon relates, that she chanced afterwards to be got with child by a Christian servant, and "being very great, walked down to a woode, where there was a ponde of water, and there by the side of the ponde brought herself to bedde, and in three hours came home with a child in her arms, a lusty boy, frolic and lively." Inkle's behaviour, however, will admit of no palliation.



Neither has the amelioration of the seasons occasioned that return of prosperity which might have been expected. The calamity of the island cannot be expected to cease, till it be relieved of that oppressive and enormous burden, which the ingratitude of Charles II. suffered to be imposed.

Barbadoes contains five districts and eleven parishes. The capital of the island is Bridge Town, which is still the chief residence of the governor. The governor's salary is 2000*l.* per annum, paid out of the exchequer from the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. duty. There is little variation between the civil government of Jamaica and that of Barbadoes, except that the court of chancery in the latter is composed of the governor and council, whereas, in the former, the governor is chancellor alone. In Barbadoes he always sits in the council, even when acting legislatively; in Jamaica, never. The courts of grand sessions, common pleas, and exchequer, are distinct in Jamaica, but united into one in Barbadoes.

The reader may form some idea of the commerce carried on by Barbadoes, from the following statement. Between the 5th of January 1787, till the 5th of January 1788, there cleared from Barbadoes,

Vessels	-	-	-	-	-	343
Number of tons	-	-	-	-	-	26,917
Men	-	-	-	-	-	1942
Value of cargoes (Sterling)	-	-	-	-	-	L. 539,605
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## CHAPTER II.

*GRENADA AND ITS DEPENDENCIES.*

Discovery and Inhabitants—French Invasion in 1650—Extermination of the Natives—The Island conveyed to the Count de Cerilla —Misconduct of the Deputy Governor—The Colony reverts to the Crown of France—Captured by the English—Claim of the Crown to lay a Duty of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on Produce Exported—Decision of the Court of King's Bench on this point—Transactions within the Colony—Internal Dissensions—French Invasion 1779—Brave Defence, and unconditional Surrender of the Garrison—Hardships exercised towards the English Planters—Restored to Britain by the Peace—Present State of the Colony.

CHRISTOPHER Columbus, in his third voyage, discovered this island \*. Its inhabitants were a numerous and warlike people; but it does not appear that Europeans looked upon them as a proper object of invasion, until Monsieur de Parquet, the French governor of Martinico, in 1650, planned an avaricious and unprovoked attack upon the island.

The want of territory could not be pleaded as an apology for this invasion; for the fertile islands of Martinico and Guadaloupe were still, in a great measure, uncultivated: nevertheless, the French commander collected about 200 desperate adventurers to his standard, and set sail for the island of Grenada.

\* Anno 1498.

da. The soldiers, previous to their embarkation, all partook of the sacrament, and, upon their landing, prayed fervently to God for success.

The Frenchman, contrary perhaps to his wishes, was received with hospitality by the natives ; so that, being obliged to affect justice in his dealings, he pretended to make a purchase of the island, by presenting some knives, hatchets, and beads to the people, and regaling the chief with *two bottles of brandy*. He proceeded next to build a fort in order to secure his honest purchase, and left his kinsman Le Compte as governor in his stead. The first accounts which we hear of this gentleman's conduct in his government, leaves no very favourable impression of his character. The natives, justly regarding the bargain as an insulting pretence to rob them of their native country, had resisted their invaders, and Le Compte could think of no better expedient to secure the settlement, than the total extermination of the Charaibes. His followers obeyed his orders with alacrity, and still farther, to accelerate the business of death, 300 men were dispatched from Martinique to to their assistance.

In one of those merciless expeditions, the historian informs us that forty Charaibes were butchered on the spot, and forty others, running to a precipice, threw themselves headlong into the sea \*. A beautiful young woman was taken alive, and two French

\* The spot from whence these miserable Charaibes threw themselves into the sea, is to this day called by the French *Le Morue de Sauteurs*, i. e. Leapers Hill.



officers disputed about possessing her; but a third coming up, decided the quarrel by shooting her through the head. The French lost only one man, and, after burning the cottages, and rooting up the provisions, came back in high spirits.

After extirpating the natives, the French proceeded next to butcher each other. After a long contest, which it is needless to detail, the governor's party gained the advantage; but De Parquet's fortune being much injured by the struggle, he agreed to sell his possession of the island to the Count Cerillac for 30,000 crowns.

Cerillac, injudiciously nominated to the government of the place, a proud and rapacious commander, whose tyranny at last driving the inhabitants to despair, he was tried for his crimes, and in consideration of his noble birth, was shot in place of being hanged.

From Cerillac the property of the island passed to the French West India Company, who, in 1674, surrendered it to the Crown. This change of possessors was less favourable to the island than might have been expected; for we find that, even as late as the beginning of this century, the island contained no more than three plantations of sugar, and two of indigo, cultivated by 251 whites, and 521 negroes. Their unfortunate situation might have continued for a long time, had not the inhabitants, in order to supply their disadvantages in the want of commerce and slaves, entered into an illicit intercourse with the Dutch; a resource which operated so powerfully

in their favour, that in 1762, when the English became possessors of the island, they found its annual produce to be no less than 11,000 hogsheads of sugar, and 24,000 pounds of indigo.

The stipulations in favour of the inhabitants at the surrender of Grenada to the British, were as follows: Their privileges and taxes were to be on a footing with those of the other Leeward Islands; and further, with respect to religion, they were to be upon a footing with the Roman Catholics of Canada.

In 1763, his Majesty issued a proclamation, declaring, that all inhabitants of this island should enjoy the benefit of the laws of England, and of appeal to the King and Council. It also declares, that express orders had been given to the governor, to form, in co-operation with the council and house of representatives, a system of laws as agreeable as possible to the spirit of the English system.

General Melville was the first governor appointed. The assembly met for the first time in 1765, and a question of the greatest moment was submitted to their consideration.

The reader has been informed upon what pretence the unwarrantable duty of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. had been laid upon the Island of Barbadoes. Unjust as these pretences were, still more despotic was the right which the royal prerogative assumed, when, without even the apparent consent of the people, a duty of the same nature and amount was laid upon Grenada.

That Grenada was a conquered country, was the

main apology offered for the measure. It was urged in addition to this humane argument, that it would be as impolitic to put Grenada in a better situation than our other Leeward Islands of the West Indies, as it would be to put her in a worse. If Grenada paid more taxes, it would be injurious to her; if she paid less, the inequality would be baneful to the others.

The case was submitted to the Court of King's Bench, and, after four elaborate pleadings, judgment was pronounced by Lord Mansfield, to the honour of his integrity, against the Crown.

It is pleasing to contemplate this victory of the colonists, because it displays the uncorrupted and undistinguishing uprightness of that court before which the question was tried; but our satisfaction is somewhat abated, when we consider the grounds upon which Lord Mansfield went, when he gave this impartial decision.

The noble Lord rested his determination solely upon this argument, that the King's proclamation, by which it was declared to the inhabitants that they were entitled to choose their representatives, and be governed by the laws of their own assembly, was issued out previous to the mandate for collecting the controverted revenue. Had not his Majesty given this prior declaration, Lord Mansfield asserted, that by the rights of conquest he was entitled to impose upon the inhabitants whatever regulations or taxes he thought fit. He then adduced, as illustrations of this position, the several cases of Wales, Ire-



land, Berwick, and New York ; in all which cases he endeavours to substantiate his argument, " that they received their laws from England, as laws imposed upon a conquered country, and not as regulations of their own adopting.

Admitting\*, for the sake of argument, that Britain had *constitutionally* a right to impose laws and taxes of her own fabrication upon a conquered country, which, by the way, is far from being self-evident, it cannot be her right to do so from the dictates of justice. If usage be an honourable pretext for an act which reason condemns, Grenada, and the other colonies, have no right to any constitution but what the royal authority imposes : but if justice and truth be independent of custom, and immutable in themselves ; if it be the duty of men to bestow on their fellow-men the same privileges which they assume to themselves ; this

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\* Mr. Edwards here enters into a minute discussion upon the instances of Ireland, Wales, &c. in which he combats, with great ability, this opinion of the Lord Chief Justice, and shows, pretty clearly, that, even upon the ground of usage, Grenada, as a colony of Great Britain, had a title to impose taxes upon herself, and that the King of Great Britain, even upon a conquered country, can impose no constitution but that of England. It is a pity, however, that the question should be put to a trial of this kind. Supposing it to be the fact, that the Kings of England at one period imposed arbitrary laws upon conquered countries, what has that to do with Grenada ? Is not self-taxation the right of every people ? We certainly acknowledge that it is by the structure of our own constitution, and ought Britons to deny to fellow-subjects what they would not part with themselves ?

colony has a right to annul every revenue but what her own representatives dictate, and the tax aforementioned is most unwarrantable injustice.

The first assembly, as was just now mentioned, met in the year 1765. At this time their attention was solely engrossed by the question of self-taxation already detailed, but a dispute of a different nature was now preparing to break out.

In 1768 orders were issued out by the Crown that the Roman Catholic capitulants should be eligible into the legislative assembly and the governor's council, as also that they should be capable of acting as justices of the peace. This mandate of his Majesty's occasioned a very serious agitation in the island. The Protestant party declaimed upon the palpable infringement of the test act, to which the Catholics rejoined, that the test act was only applicable to England and Berwick upon Tweed. Ministers, however, continued unshaken in their determination to maintain the privileges of the Catholics, so that the zealous part of the Protestant representatives finding it impossible to acquire a triumph over those of the opposite creed, retired from the house in a fit of illiberal disgust, meanly conceiving that the sole good they could perform to the public was the suppression of every opinion but their own.

Their apostacy was productive of the most injurious consequences. At no period was there a sufficient body to be collected when the public exigency required. At last the French, understanding

the perplexed situation of the island, formed, and successfully conducted, a plan for its recapture.

Twenty-five ships of the line, 10 frigates, and 5000 troops, arrived, on the 2d of July, in the harbour of St. George. Eftaing, the commander, next day attacked, with 3000 men, the small body of troops which defended the Hospital Hill, consisting of the 48th regiment, 300 militia, and 150 seamen. The French at last succeeded in carrying the post, but lost 300 men in the conflict. Lord M'Cartney, then governor of Grenada, retiring with his brave followers, took possession of the old fort at the foot of the harbour. It was in vain, however, to resist such superior force. The guns taken from his own party at the Hospital were turned upon the fort, and he was reduced to the sad necessity of unconditional surrender. To the honour of the French it should be told, that the town, though liable to be plundered by the practice of war, was protected from outrage, and safeguards granted to all who applied.

But the subsequent behaviour of the French was not quite so generous. The new governor gave strict orders that no debtor should presume to discharge his debts to a Briton, or even those debts for which a Briton was security, under a severe penalty. Those estates, also, which were possessed by English absentees were possessed in the interim by a tribe of devourers, called Conservators, whose ostensible duty was to preserve, but whose real practice was to plunder, the property consigned to



their protection. It must be confessed, however, that report of this injustice was no sooner made in France than it was condemned by administration, and the whole crew of conservators discharged.

The peace of 1783 restored Grenada, along with other of her islands which the French had captured,

Great Britain. Every friend to humanity must subscribe to my wish, that those unhappy disputes which made it such an easy prey to the arms of France, may never, at any future period, be revived.

We shall conclude the history of this island with a short account of its population, agriculture, and trade: to which it will be necessary to premise, that, since the peace of 1783, a line of distinction has been drawn from east to west between Carriacou and Union Island, the latter island and all its appendages being now attached to the government of St. Vincent.

Out of 80,000 acres of land not above 50,000 have ever been cultivated. The country is watered with springs, and various in its surface, although no parts of it are so impracticable as the high lands of Jamaica. There is a vast variety of soil; but in general the ground is fertile, and its productions are almost numberless. The exports of this island and its minor islets, in 1776, were no less valuable than 600,000*l.* Sterling, which, considering it to be the produce of 18,000 negroes, was altogether surprising.

It contains six parishes, and its dependent island Carriacou forms a seventh. Since its being ceded to Britain, the Protestant has been made the established religion. There are, accordingly, five established clergymen, whose stipends are each 360*l.* currency, and 60*l.* for a house. The church lands belonging to the Roman Catholic clergy were, by consent of the Crown, applied, partly to the better support of the Protestant clergy, and partly distributed among the Romish dissenting priests.

The capital of the island is St. George, the capital under its French possessors was Fort Royale. The remaining towns are only petty villages situated upon their harbours along the coasts.

From whatever cause it has originated, the population of the white inhabitants in Grenada has sensibly decreased of late years; at present they do not exceed 1000; in 1771, their number was known to be somewhat above 1600.

Previous to the capture of the island in 1779, the black population amounted to 35,000; in 1785, they amounted to 23,926.

But though the blacks and whites have been declining in numbers, the same cannot be asserted of the people of colour. In 1787, the number of this mongrel breed was upwards of 1100. Attempts have indeed been made to prevent or diminish this mixture of blood, by imposing fines upon manumission; but the law is evaded by resorting to another place.

The governor here, as in Jamaica, is sole chan-

cellor. His salary is 3200*l.* per annum of Grenada currency.

Their legislative assembly is composed of 26 members; their council of 12. A freehold of 50 acres gives a right to sit as the representative of any of the parishes, and a rent of ten pounds in fee, or for life, qualifies a voter.

Their courts are of different kinds. They have a court of grand sessions, of common pleas, of exchequer, of admiralty, and lastly, a court composed by the governor and council for deciding upon all appeals from the court of common pleas.

In all cases not anticipated by the laws of the island, the common and the statute law of England are made the standard of decision. The practice of Westminster Hall is resorted to when difficulties occur. It is but justice to say, that the decisions of their assembly are at all times impartial in an eminent degree.

All that remains is to take notice of the dependent islands or Grenadines, the principal of which are Carriacou and Isle Ronde. Carriacou, besides maintaining its labourers, yields annually a million of pounds of cotton. Isle Ronde is of much smaller extent, and entirely devoted to pasturage and rearing of cotton.

In estimating the commerce of Grenada, the reader may form a tolerable conception of its extent from the following statement:

In January 1787 there cleared from Grenada 118 ships, containing in all 25,764 tons burden, wrought by 1826 men, and valued in all at 614,908*l.* Sterling.



## CHAPTER III.

*ST. VINCENT'S AND ITS DEPENDENTS, AND DOMINICA.*

IN the patent which the Earl of Carlisle obtained from Charles the Second to colonize the West India islands (a circumstance before taken notice of), were included the two islands of St. Vincent's and Dominica. The English, even as early as that period, made several attempts to get the natives into subjection by ensnaring practices; but the French being equally assiduous in pursuing the same object, they were at last obliged to give up all thoughts of becoming masters of the island. At the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, these two islands, with some others, were therefore declared in a state of subjection to neither kingdoms. No sooner had this mutual agreement been entered into, than both parties appeared dissatisfied with the compromise. We find accordingly that a very different agreement was made at the end of the war which succeeded that treaty. Neither party seemed to remember that the Charaibes had a right to the dominions which they so unjustly assumed, but fairly determined that, in consideration of France possessing the island of St. Lucia, Tobago, St. Vincent's, and Dominica should be given up to the English. It must be confessed, indeed, that by this time the ancient possessors of the island (that is, the yellow Charaibes) had been reduced to a miserable remnant, not more than 100 families surviving in 1763.

## SECTION I.

## ST. VINCENT'S.

ST. VINCENT'S was so called by the Spaniards, from the saint's name on whose day it was first discovered. It does not appear that the Spaniards ever reduced them to subjection; but another people whom they at first received on their shores, probably from compassion, accomplished in time that conquest which no European nation could obtain.

Some time towards the end of the last century, a Guinea ship, with a large cargo of slaves, was wrecked on this island. The negroes escaping to the mountains, were suffered to remain by the natives, and in time grew so numerous, by means of marriage with the Indians and accessions from the runaway slaves of Barbadoes, that, commencing hostilities on the natives, they reduced their numbers very rapidly, and drove them to the north-west corner of the island. They acquired in time the appellation of the black Charaibes, in contradistinction to the aborigines, who were of a lighter complexion.

The unfortunate Indians complained of their hardships alternately to the English and French. At length the latter were persuaded to embrace their cause; and landing on the island in 1719, began to ravage the plantations of the negroes. These, though unable in open fight to resist their

invaders, became sufficiently terrible, when they sallied out at midnight from their retreats among the mountains. They obliged the French to desist from all thoughts of obtaining conquest by violence; so that, by mutual consent, a peace was agreed upon: the articles of which compromised, that the island should remain under the protection, but not the dominion, of France.

In the year 1723, an attempt was made by the British to obtain possession of the island, by the most frivolous proceedings that could be imagined. The Duke of Montague had obtained a grant for possessing St. Lucia, and St. Vincent's; but the British force which took possession of the former, were driven out by the French; so that they turned all their attention towards occupying the latter. Accordingly Captain Braithwaite was dispatched thither, to try what effect persuasive measures might have in reducing the natives to the British yoke. Coming to anchor on the island, Braithwaite beheld the strand all covered with crowds of Indians, among whom was one white, who turned out to be a Frenchman. He went, however, ashore in company with one of his countrymen, and a Frenchman; but was not a little surprised, on getting among them, to find them armed with cutlasses and fire-arms, and drawn round him in a circle, to take him prisoner. They immediately proceeded to carry him up the country; and brought him at last to their general, who sat in great state, environed with his guards. The captain was then interrogated, From whence he came, and for



what purpose? He replied, That he was an Englishman, and that he put into the coast for wood and water. The general told him, That he had been informed his visit was meant for a different purpose; namely, the subjugation of the island; and insisted upon his immediately retiring from their shores. Captain Braithwaite then returned to the ship without molestation. As soon as he got on board, he sent ashore the ship's boat, with rum, bread, and beef; and sent a messenger to the general, to inform him, that though he denied to strangers the common privilege of water and wood, yet, that he had sent him a part of what his ship's stores afforded. He received in return a polite reply from the general, by two messengers, who offered to stay in the ship as hostages, provided he wished to go again on shore. Returning, therefore, to the general, Captain Braithwaite received a more gracious reception than before; and so far ingratiated himself with the negro chief, as to persuade him, along with some others, to pay a visit to the vessel. After opening their hearts with abundance of wine, the English were at last so candid as to tell them the real object of their embassy. The negroes replied, That had such a confession been made on shore, all their authority over their countrymen could not have prevented them from becoming sacrifices to the general indignation. They declared, That their country, though protected by France, was not subject to her power; nor indeed would they ever submit to be the slaves of any European nation. Braith-

waite, therefore, finding that all further intrigue would be fruitless, dismissed the negroes with presents, and returned to Martinico.

After this period, for the space of 40 years, nothing worthy of detail took place in the island, except the incessant hostilities between the black and the yellow Charaibes. It may be easily guessed, from the diminished numbers of the latter, on which side the victory lay during these contests. It is remarkable, however, that this victorious people (viz. the Charaibes) should have borrowed from the vanquished a national and extraordinary custom; namely, flattening the foreheads, so as to augment the thickness of the skull.

The peace of Paris gave up St. Vincent's to the British. It was accordingly divided, and sold to different proprietors in lots. It must be observed, however, very little to the credit of the British government, that the extent of these sales was not limited by the lands inhabited by the Charaibes; but comprehended the whole island, from one end to the other. It is not wonderful that the Charaibes, indignant at seeing their country parcelled out by those who had no title to the possession of it, should have taken up arms against such usurpers. Hostilities were severely retaliated by the British, for it was the object of ministry to extirpate the natives; but the remonstrances of the military employed in the island, obliged them to abandon the scheme.

During the American war, St. Vincent's was exposed in a state so defenceless, that it was subjected

to the arms of France by no more than 650 men. Perhaps the juncture which the black Charaibes formed with the French immediately on their landing, made the conquest still easier. At the peace of 1783 it again reverted to the British.

Out of 84,000 acres of well watered, although in general mountainous and rugged land, which St. Vincent's contains, about 46,000 are at present cultivated; one half of which is possessed by the British, and the other by the Charaibes.

In the British territory there are five parishes. There is only one considerable town in the island; namely, Kingston, the capital. The others are no more than despicable villages.

The system of civil government, in all respects, assimilates to Grenada. The governor's salary is 2000*l.* per annum.

By the last estimate which was made, the white inhabitants amounted to 1400, the blacks to 11,850. In this latter number, however, we must include the negroes of the smaller dependent islands; such as Bequia, Mustique, and Union, which contribute a considerable share to the general estimate. The reader may form a tolerable notion of the trade which subsists between St. Vincent's and Great Britain, by the following statement. In the year 1787 there sailed from St. Vincent's and its appendages, 122 vessels, manned in all by 969 men, whose cargoes were valued at 186,450*l.* 14*s.* 8*d.* Sterling.



## SECTION II.

## DOMINICA.

THIS island was so called from being discovered on a Sabbath day. Little notice was taken of it before its falling into the possession of the English in 1759.

Previous to this time, it had been settled upon by a number of French planters, who, upon taking the oath of allegiance to the English government, and paying a small quit-rent, were all confirmed in their property. The remaining land, when sold in separate lots, brought the sum of 312,092 l. 11 s. 1 d. Sterling.

To this day, however, the French inhabitants constitute the more numerous people in the island. These receive their manners and religion principally from Martinique, on which this island is looked upon as an appendage.

Dominica was rising into affluence and consideration at the eve of the American war: She maintained a traffic with America, with the other West India islands, with France, and with Spain. But unfortunately the contest between the mother country and her colonists blasted the growing expectations of the island. Such was the shameful inattention to this once flourishing island, that, during the hottest of the war, no greater military appointment was allowed to Dominica than six officers and 100 men.

This carelessness on the part of Britain undoubtedly attracted the attention of France. It was suspected also (I know not if from sufficient authority) that some French inhabitants attached to their former masters, invited an invasion of the French from Martinique. On the seventh of September 1778, a French vessel of 40 guns, three frigates, and about 30 sail of schooners and sloops, having on board above 2000 regular troops, besides a banditti of volunteers, appeared off the island, commanded by General Bouille. By the treachery of some of the inhabitants Fort Cashacrou was reduced to their possession. They then proceeded towards the town, which was but feebly defended by its ill provided batteries; and to accelerate the progress of the invasion, the French inhabitants kept aloof from action. But the small remaining body made a gallant defence; and, although their bravery was not sufficient to repel their invaders, it procured them very honourable terms of capitulation. They were permitted to march out with military honours, and to retain their religion, government, laws, and possessions.

De Bouille, after his conquest, returned to Martinique, leaving the island under the command of the Marquis of Duchilleau, whose conduct during four years was insolent and tyrannical.

He disarmed the English inhabitants, and forbade them, under the penalty of being shot, to assemble more than two in a place. He prohibited them from walking the streets, after a certain hour, with-

out a candle, and rewarded, with promotion, a sentinel who shot an English gentleman attempting to go on board his own vessel in the harbour. Every private letter, before delivery, was submitted to his inspection; and he frequently descended to the meanness of going himself in disguise to listen, unobserved, to private domestic conversations.

By his secret orders the town of Roseau was set on fire. Instead of relieving or assisting the sufferers (as common humanity would have dictated), he presided on the occasion to see that no assistance should be given to the English houses that were on fire, but gave permission to the soldiers to load themselves with the pillage. On this melancholy disaster the sufferers were computed to have lost 200,000*l.* Sterling.

The prosperity of Dominica vanished with her liberty. During five years its commerce was annihilated. All connection with France was given up, so that their commodities were either sent to England, and sold at a low rate, through the medium of Dutch neutral ships, or else conveyed by imperial vessels to Ostend, and there vended at a rate still lower. The destruction of commerce proved in a short time the ruin of the planters, numbers of whom abandoned their property in despair. At length, after groaning five years under the government of tyrants, the happy day arrived, when, to the indescribable joy of the inhabitants, their privileges, their property, their hopes of prosperity,



were restored by the return of the British government \*.

Dominica contains 186,436 square acres of land, and is divided into ten parishes. Its capital is Roseau, a town of an irregular figure, about half a mile in length, and two furlongs in breadth. The surface of the island is very various, sometimes swelling into bold irregular hills, and sometimes spreading into wide fertile and beautiful valleys. The higher grounds still retain volcanos, and hot springs of salubrious quality.

The island is watered by thirty beautiful rivers. The soil is of various kinds. That of a black colour mostly adjoining the shore is in general of the richest quality. Of fertile land, however, there cannot be said to be any considerable portion in Dominica. It contains 50 plantations; and these, at an average of one year with another, hardly produce above 3000 hogheads of sugar.

It must be allowed, however, that coffee is here a more productive crop.

The number of white inhabitants of all, by returns in 1788, were 1236, free negroes 445, slaves 14,967, and about 30 families of the native Caribes. These are a quiet inoffensive people, that live principally by fishing and fowling. They are ama-

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\* The civil government, reinstated by the British, was like that of the other islands. Their legislature was vested in an assembly of nineteen, a council of twelve, and a governor, whose salary is twelve hundred a-year.

zingly dexterous at managing the bow, and display much ingenuity in weaving baskets and panniers of straw and the barks of trees.

In the year 1787 there sailed from Dominica 162 vessels, wrought by 18,146 men, the cargoes amounting to 302,987l. 15s. Sterling.

## CHAPTER IV.

Leeward Charaibbean Island Government, comprehending St. Christopher's, Nevis, Antigua, Montserrat, and the Virgin Islands—History and Description of each—Exports—Profits of the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. duty—Conclusion of the History.

SINCE the year 1672 these several islands have constituted one government, and are subject to the authority of one who is called Captain General of the Leeward Charaib Islands. The residence of this governor is at Antigua, although he occasionally visits the others. His vicegerent is a lieutenant governor, who resides at the same place. During the absence of both from the other islands, the president of the assembly takes the executive authority.

## SECTION I.

## ST. CHRISTOPHER'S.

THIS island, so called by the natives from its fertility, was discovered by Columbus, and honoured with his name. Though never cultivated by the Spaniards, it is the oldest of all the Charaibbean settlements, French and English. Captain Roger North, on a voyage to Surinam, was accompanied by a mariner of the name of Painton, a man of distinguished abilities, to whose sagacity in demonstrating the utility of a settlement on this island in preference to the continent, England was first indebted for



the possession of St. Christopher's. This intelligent seaman communicated his intention to his friend Mr. Warner, who resolving to put the plan into effect, sailed with fourteen associates to Virginia, from whence he proceeded to St. Christopher's. He arrived there in the month of January 1623, and in the space of nine months reared an excellent crop of tobacco.

It has been a common mistake to suppose that the entry of the French upon this island was coeval with the settlement of the English. Desnambuc, the leader of the first French colonists who ever landed on St. Christopher's, set sail from France two years after Warner's arrival. The mistake has undoubtedly originated in this circumstance, that Warner's colony having been reduced by a hurricane to the necessity of returning home, he made his second voyage to St. Christopher's at the same time with the French. The truth is, Desnambuc had been attacked in his passage by a Spanish galleon, and obliged to make for this island in order to repair. He was kindly received by the English, who, at that time, conscious of the injustice of their behaviour towards the Indians, were glad of an accession to their strength. Fortified by this alliance, they proceeded to the most unwarrantable barbarities towards the Charaibes, murdering their warriors, and making slaves of their women. Irritated by the wrongs of their countrymen, the natives of other islands flocked in numbers to invade them. A bloody battle ensued, in which the Europeans lost a hundred men

upon the field, but remained victors by the superiority of fire-arms.

The respective leaders, Warner and Desnambuc, soon after returned home, in order to fortify their settlement with fresh adventurers. The latter, under the patronage of Richelieu, obtained a charter for a company to trade to his colony; but the ships fitted out for this object were so ill stored with necessaries, that the greater part of the crews perished for want on the voyage. The remainder, on landing at St. Christopher's, formed a treaty offensive and defensive with the English inhabitants; but, as we before mentioned, their united forces were unfit to resist the invasion of the Spaniards. But, indeed, when we reflect on the behaviour of both to the miserable Charaibes, we can but half regret (though we seriously condemn) the cruelty of those invaders who massacred them in their turn.

The island had scarcely been restored to its usual population, after being thinned by the swords of the Spaniards, than national animosities began to be kindled up. In the reign of King Charles II. the French inhabitants rose upon the English and drove them from the island. They were restored by the peace of Breda, but again driven away, as before, when James II. had abdicated the throne. Eight months after, the English returned in greater numbers to retaliate hostilities, overpowered the enemy, and transported numbers of them to Martinique.

In 1705, a French armament landed on the island, and committed barbarous devastation on the En-

glish property. Parliament, however, humanely recompensed the sufferers; and happily this was the last display of national resentment in the island. By the peace of Utrecht it was ceded entirely to the British; and such of the French inhabitants as chose to swear allegiance were naturalized.

Till 1782, St. Christopher's continued in our possession. At that period it was captured by the arms of France, but restored at the peace in 1783.

St. Christopher's contains about 43,726 acres of land, of which about 21,000 are devoted to pasturage and the rearing of sugar. The interior of the country is mountainous and barren, although the fertility of the plains makes ample amends for the sterility of its hills.

The soil of St. Christopher's is essentially different from that of the other islands. It is light and porous, and appears to be a mixture of virgin mould mixed up with ferruginous pumice. In all probability its qualities were occasioned by subterraneous fires. For the production of sugar it is certainly unequalled. The choice lands of this island yield, at an average, 32 cwt. of sugar per acre annually; and canes planted in particular spots have actually yielded the astonishing quantity of 8000 pounds per acre.

St. Christopher's contains nine parishes. Basseterre is still the capital of the island. Of the sum allotted to the salary of the governor, this island contributes 1000*l.* currency.

The house of assembly consists of 24 members;



the council of 10. The governor acts as chancellor *ex officio*, and executes his duty alone. It was at one period proposed to join other gentlemen of the island to his office, but the inhabitants rightly objected, that persons thus elected would be interested in the decision of every cause that presented.

There is only one court of jurisdiction, of which the chief justice is appointed by the King, and holds a salary of 600*l.* a year.

The inhabitants are computed at 4000 whites, 26,000 negro slaves, and 300 free blacks and mulattoes. Every white from 16 to 60 must enter with the militia, so that their number is pretty considerable. They have two regiments of whites, besides a corps of blacks.

In fact, the number of militia, and the peculiar nature of the island, was a reasonable enough excuse urged by government for refusing to protect this colony with British forces. A thousand effective men, well armed and supplied, upon ground so unequal, might have easily resisted all invaders when it was last captured.

## SECTION II.

### NEVIS.

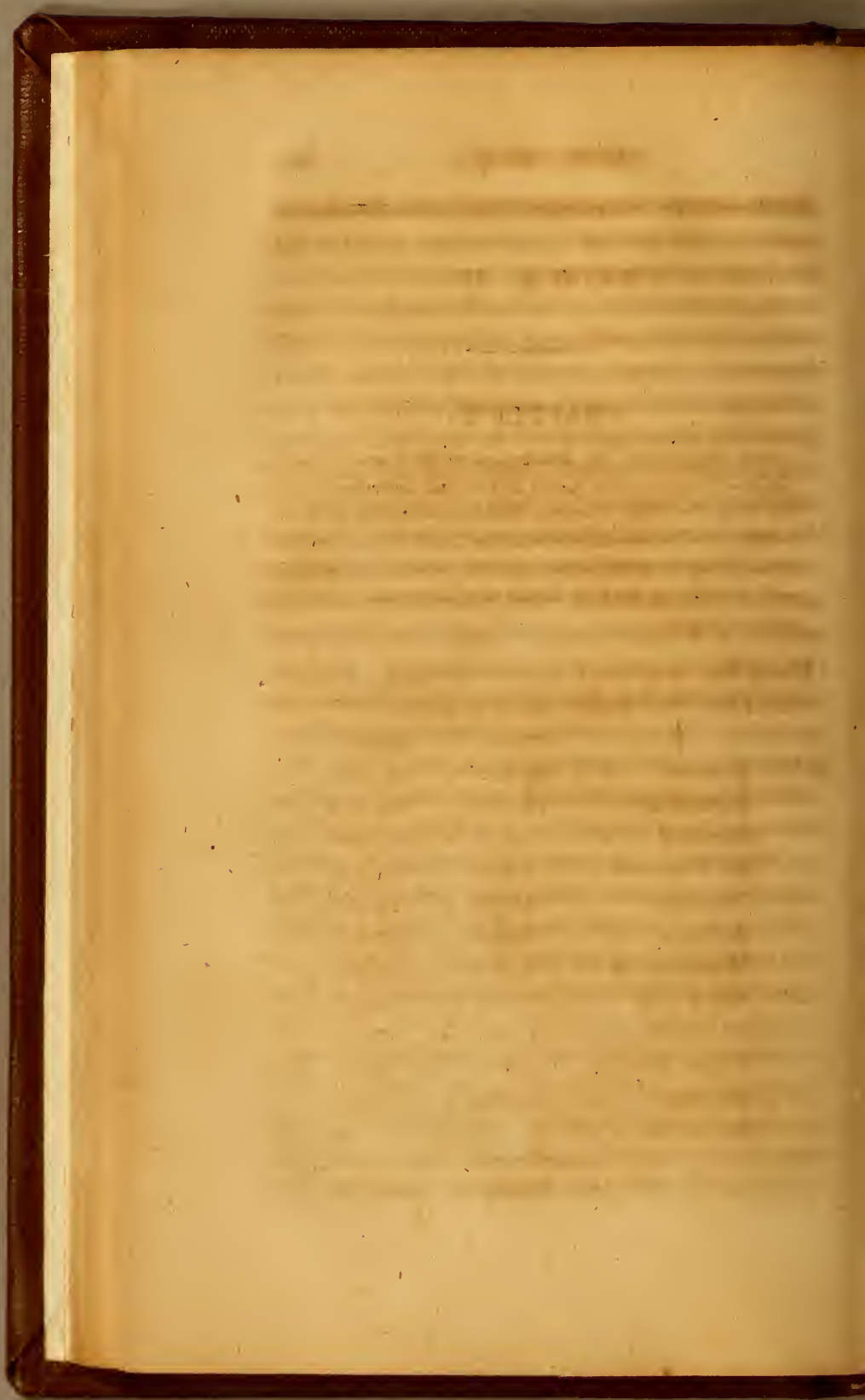
THE island of Nevis rises like a single mountain from the ocean, its base not exceeding eight leagues. The crater upon the summit of the mountain, and the hot springs, impregnated with sulphur, leave us no room to doubt that this spot was a volcanic

eruption. The summit probably emitted a smoke at its first discovery by Columbus, and hence it was denominated Nieves, or the Snows, by the Spaniards.

From the whole surface and appearance of this island there can be little doubt entertained that it was produced at some remote period by an explosion of a volcanic nature. The top of the mountain is exactly a hollow or crater, and it contains a hot spring of water, which is to a very great degree impregnated with sulphur.

The island is as well watered as it is beautiful. In general the soil is exceeding fertile, but in some places it is of a dry nature. This, however, is, upon the whole, no material disadvantage, as in these places yams and other vegetables are abundantly produced, which perhaps would not accommodate so well to a more fertile, but more watery soil.

The English first occupied this island in 1628. The number of its white inhabitants is estimated at 600 men; the blacks amount to 10,000. This makes it necessary for them to maintain as respectable a militia as their numbers will admit of. Included in their militia they have a troop of 50 horse, but no British troops are ever quartered in the island.





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## BOOK IV.

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### CHAPTER I.

Summary Account of the Inhabitants of the several Islands—  
Classes—Emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland—Predominant Character of the European Residents—Creoles, or Natives—Effect of Climate—Character of the Creole Women and Children—Of the People of Colour, and the different Casts or Tribes—Restrictions on the Free Blacks and Mulattoes—Their Character at length:

FROM the most exact account the present population of the West Indies stands as follows :

	Whites.		Blacks.
Jamaica -	30,000	-	250,000
Barbadoes -	16,167	-	62,115
Grenada -	1,000	-	23,926
St. Vincent's	1,450	-	11,853
Dominica -	1,236	-	14,967
Antigua -	2,590	-	37,808
Montserrat -	1,300	-	10,000
Nevis -	1,000	-	8,420
St. Christopher's	1,900	-	20,435
Virgin Isles -	1,200	-	9,000
Bahamas -	1,060	-	2,241
Bermudas -	5,462	-	4,919
Total -	65,305	-	455,684

Besides the four great classes into which West Indians ought properly to be divided, viz. Creoles, or native whites—European whites—Creoles of mixed blood—and free blacks—and last of all, Negroes in slavery, there are other residents who deserve notice. From North America there are many emigrants; and the Jews, who have penetrated to every quarter where the human race have existence, are also found in these islands. They are permitted the exercise of their religion without restraint, and they have accordingly abundance of synagogues over all the West Indies. In a political view, they rank as inferior to the other whites, being incapable of voting at an election, or of being sent as representatives to any assembly. In their manners they exactly resemble those of their brethren in other countries\*.

It is the common imagination of those who, from motives of improving their fortunes, retire from home to the West Indies, that they shall live according to their wishes upon less application to business than they have been hitherto accustomed to give. But the fallacy of this belief is soon experienced; for in no part of the world is assiduity in business so continually and indispensably necessary.

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\* M. Neckar gives the following estimate of the whites, free negroes, and slaves of the French West Indies: Whites he computes at 63,682; free blacks, 13,429; slaves, 437,736. Since the time of this estimate their numbers have probably increased.

Indeed the first possessors of these islands took possession of their estates with very different prospects than those of wealth and idleness. It was to enjoy the liberty of civil and religious opinions that the first adventurers abandoned their homes, when they saw a government, either monarchical or republican, erected in England contrary to their principles and inclinations.

At present the professions of law, physic, and divinity are filled up in the West Indies by men of talents and respectability, and it is but justice to say, that their abilities are accompanied with liberal public encouragement. Local and contracted prejudices may incline some individuals to consider an encomium on the genius of these men as undeserved and partial; but let such persons recollect that Nature has thrown the seeds of genius on every soil, and that superior abilities, in a general sense, are the result of cultivation, and by no means a local quality.

From the sea and land service of Great Britain numbers of settlers accrue to the West Indies. Such men, tired of that variety of hardships to which their profession exposes them, wisely prefer a more sober and industrious life.

After enumerating the tribe of factors, clerks, and tradesmen, who become attached to the soil, we may take notice of the man whose business is to cultivate the land. This profession, known by the various names of planter, overseer, and manager, is usually composed of those who have been



educated to no particular business at home, and who imagining the task of superintending the lives and labours of African slaves, and managing a sugar estate, to require no uncommon stock of sagacity, embark in offices for which they are not always capable.

It will readily, therefore, appear, that since the generality of settlers in the West Indies are emigrants from the mother country, their habits and manners will be nearly the same with those of their countrymen at home. Notwithstanding the fairness of this conclusion, there are authors who, in treating of the lives and dispositions of these West Indians, hold them up to the world as characters the most depraved, licentious, and detestable; as if, in the change of climate, Britons assumed a new, but degraded stamp of character; or, as if Britain, in colonizing her settlements, expatriated every vicious, but not one virtuous, individual.

The picture they have drawn being so grossly overcharged, is too unnatural to excite belief. What should alter their character so much to the worse? I confess that, from a change of circumstances and habits of living, some difference of manners must arise; but I hope I shall be able to show that the change tends rather to meliorate than deprave them.

In removing to the West Indies, the emigrant suddenly finds himself among a people where the distinction of colour constitutes a marked difference in point of respectability. His complexion places

him in that class to which pre-eminence is strongly attached ; and if it be allowed that to make a man consider himself as respectable, is as certain a method of making him assume a character really respectable, as to degrade him in his own opinion will be to sink him to the level of his supposition, it must readily occur that the new settler will rather rise than fall in the scale of true respectability. Indeed the consequence I have mentioned actually takes place. The poorest white feels himself more upon a level with the rich than a European in the same circumstances at home, and therefore addresses him in a style of frankness and manly independence.

“ Where slavery,” says a great writer, “ is established in any part of the world, those who are free, are by far the most proud and jealous of their freedom. Freedom is to them not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege. Not seeing there, that freedom, as in countries where it is a common blessing, may be united with much abject toil, with great misery, with all the exterior of servitude, liberty looks among them like something that is more noble and liberal. Thus the people of the southern colonies (of America) are much more strongly, and with a higher and more stubborn spirit, attached to liberty, than those to the northward. Such were all the ancient commonwealths ; such were our Gothic ancestors ; such in our days are the Poles ;

“and such will be all masters of slaves, who are not slaves themselves.”

Those who are inclined to undervalue the character of the West Indians. Tax them with ostentation and self importance. The charge must in part be admitted ; but let not these imperfections be exaggerated or too severely reprehended, when the virtues of benevolence and hospitality are so strikingly their concomitants. From the prevalence of the latter virtue, there is not a tolerable inn throughout all the West Indies \*.

To the same independent spirit, which I before remarked arises from the consciousness of equality, may be attributed the unsubmitting litigious temper which the West Indian discovers ; for vices and virtues grow up naturally together. This litigious temper is not wholly without some advantages to counterbalance its evil effects. Thus accustomed to argue upon their most important rights, they acquire by habit a knowledge in law matters far superior to the people of other countries, indepen-

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\* There are peculiarities in the whites as well as negroes, which deserve to be detailed to those who study their history. Nothing can be more striking than the vast disparity between their tables and their houses. Their side-board is loaded with plate and choice wines, their dinner is served up in twenty covers, and all this in a hovel worse than a European barn. The negro attendants are numerous, but meanly habited ; none but the principal servant wears shoes or stockings, the rest are half naked when they wait at table.



dent of that shrewdness which the exercise of their faculties must occasion.

But for the true features of the West Indian character, we must principally consult the Creoles or natives. In their persons the Creoles are taller than the generality of Europeans; and although they want that thickness which is requisite, according to our ideas of beauty, to complete the figure of a tall man, yet they have amazing dexterity and suppleness of limbs, and a graceful easy carriage. There are two remarkable circumstances about their bodies, which shows how provident the hand of nature is to obviate the physical disadvantages of an intemperate climate by wise and merciful means. The socket of their eye is remarkably sunk in their head, by which means the impending eyebrow shields the sight from the intolerable blaze of the sun. In the next place, there is a constant coolness to the touch in their skins, which is certainly occasioned by some effectual means which are appointed to preserve the body in a moderation of temperature unnecessary to the inhabitants of colder latitudes.

The ladies of the Creoles are sober, temperate, and possessed of great self-denial. Except the exercise of dancing, they have no other amusements to excite the spirits to a volatile gaiety; for the ruinous attachment to masquerades, gaming-tables, and assemblies, so prevalent in England, is happily here unknown. Nothing can exceed the sobriety of their diet. Lemonade is their chief potation;

and their food is in general of a vegetable kind. It cannot be denied that in many respects they are infinitely inferior in attractions of person to our countrywomen; for though their figures are fine, there is not much spirit or animation either in their features or manners. They want, too, that indispensable requisite of complete beauty, the glow of youthful vermilion which heightens the graces of the English fair. But their inferiority in beauty of complexion is recompensed by the brilliant lustre of their large and expressive eyes. Their teeth are also remarkably fine, owing to the precautions they take to preserve them clean, and the constant use of the chew-stick, whose qualities operate as a strong detergent.

The most prominent circumstance in the character of the natives is the astonishing progress of the mind at a very early period of life. The philosophers of Europe have taken notice of this phenomenon; but arguing in an analogical manner from the nature of plants to that of animals, they have produced, as far as I can judge, an unfounded assertion. They tell us, that as vegetables in a warm climate rise sooner to perfection, and sooner ready than those of European growth; so the West Indian mind unfolds its powers at an earlier period, and also proportionably soon falls into decay. Let such philosophers, however, recollect, that in a climate so warm the mind is more easily led into licentious habits, and consequently, with equal durability of powers to the European, must, from this

circumstance, sooner fall off, without alleging natural imbecility as the cause. Again, let it be remembered that, from local situation, the mind is incapable of finding objects whereupon its faculties may be exercised, and its vigour consequently augmented. And, lastly, that in those instances where the faculties of a West Indian mind has been unduced to waste its early faculties upon unworthy objects, and where favourable circumstances have induced habits of reflection, its genius has remained undiminished to a late period of life.

But the qualities of the heart are more conducive to general happiness than those of the head; and in these qualities I cannot certainly suppose the Creole inferior to any other of his species. Their dispositions are as generous as their manners are frank and independent. They have no falsehood, no meanness, no concealment in their character, and judging of mankind by themselves, they suspect not another of such unamiable dispositions.

Philosophers have been gruelled between the two opinions respecting the effect of climate. Since the history of mankind, it has been observed as a general rule, that conquerors have come from the north. Again, in the warmest latitudes, courage and strength have been eminently conspicuous; and, when we travel to the farthest boundaries of the north, we behold the courage of man expire in the Laplander. Are we to believe, then, that timidity is the consequence of heat? I admit that indolence may result from such a cause; but indolence and timidity are



not cause and effect. The Creole is attached to ease and pleasure; and he is not fond of exerting the faculties of mind. But when the dormant qualities of his soul are excited, he evinces ability to act and to think with the most spirited energy. In personal courage the Creoles are by no means defective, as, upon innumerable occasions, they have signally displayed.

The West Indian, it is said, has a ridiculous propensity to magnify his hopes of prosperity, and to gratify his imagination with dreams of improbable wealth and absurd anticipation. There is no quality in their soil or their climate which contributes to this effect, as writers have fancifully supposed. It arises very evidently from the nature of their property, which, unlike European estates, yields a certain and stated return, when submitted to the industry of farmers. The West Indian becomes his own farmer; and as the difference of one year's production with another's is altogether astonishing, the West Indian is easily betrayed to hope for a sudden accumulation of wealth.

Of the people of mixed complexion, who are called people of colour, there are various degrees. A sambo is the offspring of a black woman by a mulatto man, or of a mulatto woman by a black man. The mulatto is the offspring of a black woman by a white man; the quadroon is the child of a mulatto woman by a white man, and the mustee of a quadroon woman by a white man. The Spaniards

introduced nicer distinctions, which it is needless here to enumerate.

I believe, over all our sugar islands, the descendants of negroes by whites, whom the law entitles to the full privileges of freedom, are such as are three degrees removed from the negro venter. All below this go by the general term of Mulatto.

In Jamaica there was anciently a distinction between those born of freed mothers and such as had been immediately released by the will of their owners. This arose from a maxim of law which originated from them other country, and was established over the colonies, that the property of what is born accrues to the possessor of the mother. Until the year 1748, persons born under the latter circumstances, that is, whose mothers had been manumitted by their masters after their birth, were denied the trial by jury, and held unworthy of giving judicial evidence. These hardships have been in part mitigated ; but much yet remains to be done. In most of the British islands, their evidence is only received in those cases where no particular act is passed in favour of the white person accused. The negro has a master to protect him from gross abuse ; but the mulatto, by this partial institution, has no security against hardship and oppression. They are likewise debarred from being appointed to the lowest offices of public trust : They cannot hold the King's commission even in a black corps ; nor can they vote for representatives at elections.

It is to be acknowledged, that their degraded situ-

ation is in some degree mitigated by the generosity which the members of West Indian assemblies are ready to grant to people of colour, whose education and baptism entitles them to respect even in contradiction to express statutes on the subject.

Still, however, partial instances of generosity do not justify the humiliating state of subjection to which this unfortunate people are reduced. The lowest and most worthless white will behave with insolence to the best educated free man of colour; and as contempt always degrades a character, they are unprofitable members of the community.

Whatever may be said upon the propriety or impropriety of equalizing these people with those of a different complexion, can it be denied that wisdom and humanity demand the immediate redress of one intolerable grievance? The injury I allude to is their incapability to appear as witnesses, even in cases where they complain of personal injustice. What attachment to his soil; what gratitude to the protection of laws; what motive to benefit the society to which he belongs; or, in fine, what dignity or independence of mind can that man possess, who is conscious that every miscreant of a paler complexion may insult him with impunity?

Not only from the sphere above him has the free mulatto reason to expect ill usage: Situated, as he is, in an insulated and intermediate state between the black and the white, he is despised by the one, and enviously hated by the other. The black may consider his subjection to a white man as in some



measure tolerable, but the idea of being the slave of a slave he utterly abhors.

In their behaviour to whites the mulattoes are modest and implicit. They are accused, however, (I am afraid with justice) of abusing their power over the blacks. Indeed, a different line of conduct cannot be possibly expected. The slave who is made a master is ever the most unfeeling tyrant, as the meanest parasite of prosperity is the most insolent insulter of misfortune.

There is one charge brought against the mulattoes, which, though it cannot be denied, consideration of circumstances will enable us to palliate: I mean the incontinency of their women. These are over all the West India islands maintained as kept mistresses to white men. But if we examine the situation of these unfortunate women, we shall find much more reason to blame the cruelty of their keepers, in inviting them to this disgraceful life, than of their imprudence in accepting the offer. Uninstructed in maxims of morality, untaught even in the simplest parts of education, unable to procure husbands either from among the whites or the young men of their own complexion, (the former regarding such an union as base and degrading, the latter, too degraded themselves to form such a settled connection); under such circumstances, they have a strong apology to plead for their conduct.

Besides, this connection between the keeper and the mistress, if not in the light of wedlock, is considered at least as equally innocent. They call their

keeper by the endearing appellation of husband; they are faithful and affectionate to his interests; and to the rest of mankind they behave with decency and distance. Few, very few indeed, abandon themselves to that infamous species of prostitution which is openly avowed in the populous cities of Europe.

The injustice of retaining so many beautiful, and in all respects amiable women, in the disgraceful state of concubinage, demands immediate redress. But by whom shall the example be set? By the victims of this injustice it *cannot*, and by the seducers I am afraid it *will* not, be effected. To the humane dispositions of these people of colour, the most agreeable testimony is given by a respectable author, Don Antonio de Ulloa, when speaking of the forlorn and friendless circumstances to which many poor Europeans are reduced (who, emigrating to the Spanish West Indies in hopes of better fortune, can find no means of subsistence). Many of these (says the Spaniard) traverse the streets till they have nothing left to purchase food or lodgings. Wearied with going in quest of employment, affected by the disappointment of their hopes, and the unfavourable change of climate, they retire, sick and melancholy, to lie down in the squares of churches and porticoes. The people of colour here display their generosity, when the rich and selfish merchant refuses his mite to relieve their miseries. The mulatto and the negro pitying their afflictions, carry them home to their houses; they nourish,

comfort, and restore the poor sufferer, and if they die, say prayers for their souls. Such is the pleasing account of the generosity of the mulattoes of Carthagena, and any one acquainted with those of the other West Indies will not hesitate to ascribe the same character to them which we have here assigned to the former.

In treating of the Creoles or natives of the West Indies, and of the mulattoes or those of mixed blood, we have confined ourselves to those who are either partially or entirely white. We should now treat of the free blacks in a distinct chapter, were there any striking dissimilarity between these and the blacks in a state of slavery. Our next chapter, therefore, is appropriated to the consideration of the negro character in general.



## CHAPTER II.

Of Negroes in a State of Slavery—Preliminary Observations—Origin of the Slave Trade—Portuguese Settlement on the African Coast—Negroes introduced at Hispaniola—Hawkins's Voyage—African Company established by James the First—Charters granted—Description of the African Coast—Forts and Factories—Exports from Great Britain—Number of Negroes who are at present exported to the British Colonies—State of the Trade from 1771 to 1787—Number of Negroes at this Time exported annually to the different Nations of Europe.

THE number of negroes at present in the British West Indies is no less than 450,000. To contemplate the subjection of so many of our species to the absolute disposal of others, is no very pleasing prospect; and the picture is heightened in its deformity when we reflect on the numbers of those who, from their native soil, their homes and their friends, have been dragged into this degrading condition.

Yet, however odious and improper the traffic may be, it is evident that the trade may be bad, and yet the possessor of the slaves be guiltless of the crimes with which it has been fashionable of late years to load him; and accordingly, whatever malice I may excite among those whose indignation is too zealous to select the just victims of indignation, I shall consider myself justifiable in attempting to rescue from unmerited opprobrium the characters of those who are at this time subjected to,

popular condemnation. By what means have the greater part of the possessors of slaves in the West Indies come into their estates? By inheritance, and by accident. It may be said that they should abandon their property, when they find that the possession of it is not to be justified by humanity. This has in fact been done. Humane men in Britain, influenced by the universal sympathy for the real or supposed injuries of the African negro, sent out orders to the factors of their West India possessions to enfranchise the slaves upon their estates. They have, however, been since convinced that such well meant benevolence is not even consistent with the interest of the slaves themselves.

The Society established in Great Britain for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, are also possessors of estates in the West Indies, as a collective body. The feelings of these men were as sensibly alive to the sufferings of their fellow creatures as any other Christians; and if they had considered it as the real benefit of the negro to be immediately emancipated, they would doubtless have thought it their most sacred duty to have done so. But, upon serious and mature deliberation, their judgment convinced them to the contrary, and they have been also obliged, in order to divide the work, to purchase others, and keep them in the same situation.

The sole object of investigation ought then to be, is the conduct of the West India planters to their slaves, considering the ordinary defect of human

power, worse than the usage of a master to his servants should properly be?

We shall now proceed to lay before the reader some account of the origin and existing state of the slave trade. The following chapter shall contain an account of the negro, his character and disposition, of their conveyance to, and treatment in the West Indies; after which I shall take notice of the abuses which are said to exist in the practice of the trade.

Under the celebrated Prince Henry of Portugal, in 1442, the first African slaves were carried from home by Europeans. Anthony Gonzales had captured two moors near Cape Bojador, and brought them home; but being ordered by his Prince to restore them to Africa, he sold them at the Rio del Ora, and received from the moors ten blacks and some gold dust. The avarice of the Portuguese was awakened by this successful exchange, and a traffic was begun on a large scale. Forty years the King of Portugal assumed the title of Lord of Guinea.

As far back as 1502 we hear of negroes employed in the mines of Hispaniola. Ovando, indeed, forbade their importation on account of the wickedness they taught the Indians; but so busy were the Spaniards in extirpating these unhappy people, that negroes were found indispensably necessary, and permission to import them was again restored.

Twelve years after, at the instance of Bartholomew, a man whose philanthropy engaged him



very cordially to befriend and protect the Indians, a patent was granted entitling certain persons to import annually 4000 negroes into the Spanish West Indies. Las Casas is accused of inconsistency in thus alleviating the miseries of one race of men at the expence of another. But let it be remembered, that similar evils inflicted upon different individuals will not produce invariably the same degree of hardship. Las Casas saw with grief and indignation the deplorable calamities of the unfriended Indians. He beheld a once happy and an innocent people, who had never known calamity till it was inflicted by the hands of Europeans, reduced in a short time from 1,000,000 to 60,000 individuals. He compassionated their slavery the more because they had known better days, and were unaccustomed to the tasks that were imposed. He calculated, therefore, very wisely, when he advised the avaricious Spaniards, since their minds must be kept in employment, rather to devote a hardy and savage people, accustomed to the severest tyranny at home, to the task, than those to whom oppression was new, and whose minds were too delicate for slavery.

The negroes imported from Africa were, from their earliest years, the objects of severity, and their tempers had been consequently inured to the pain of it, and their bodies were, besides, of a firmer texture than those inhabitants of a delicious climate, to whom the fruits of the earth sprung up almost spontaneously. Las Casas could not be ex-

pected, unless endowed with inspiration, to calculate the future effects of the traffic, and his conduct was therefore as humane as it was judicious.

John Hawkins was at that time in the service of Elizabeth, by whom he was afterwards knighted. Understanding that slaves fetched a good price at Hispaniola, he was tempted to set sail with a fleet of three ships, one of 120, another of 100, and one of 40 tons burden. His armament was manned with 100 men. He set out for Guinea, October 1562, and landing at Sierra Leone, by the most horrid and unjustifiable means collected 300 slaves. Touching at Hispaniola, he made a profitable exchange, and returned to England after 11 months absence.

The following year he sailed with six ships, among which was the *Jesus* of 700 tons, and being joined in his voyage by two others, proceeded to Guinea. After some disasters, he landed at Cape de Verde on the African coast. Here he laid snares for the natives, whom the historian of this voyage represents as "a gentle and loving people;" but the crew of the *Minion*\*, probably shocked at the unmanly method he took to procure his cargo, gave a private warning to the unsuspecting natives; and Hawkins watched for them in vain. The admiral then parted from the *Minion*, and proceeded to the Island Alcatras.

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\* One of the two ships who joined Hawkins after he had put to sea.

Here the English again tried their snares to inveigle the Africans, but they avoided them. They followed them in vain with their fire-arms, for they retired into the woods. Disappointment forced them to proceed to another island called Sambula. The natives of this island, it appears, were cannibals; and the English, *humanely* determining to punish their cruelty, burnt and destroyed their villages with great zeal. The natives, however, were too nimble for their search, escaping all their pursuits.

Leaving the further particulars of this *gallant* admiral's exploits upon the African shore, we proceed to remark, that the French and Portuguese at this time maintained a contract with the natives to supply them with slaves. Their conduct was more humane, for they only bargained for such of the natives as were slaves already, and who were occasionally used as a repast to the natives. Hawkins (unprincipled villain!) made a third piratical voyage; but, by the mercy of Heaven, perished, with all his gang, in the attempt.

In 1618, a company of merchants in London obtained a patent for exclusive trade. They were obliged, however, to abandon their project, from the scantiness of the profits which accrued from their expeditions. Under Charles I. it was again granted to another application, and the profits turned out to be more considerable. But their success attracting notice, others embarked in an illicit traffic,



and interlopers of all nations pouring in upon the coast, this monopoly was abandoned, and never continued till 1662. Ten years after this period, no less a sum than 111,000*l.* were raised in nine months by the subscribers, for constituting a company; a third of which sum was devoted to the purpose of building forts upon the coast. One immediate benefit that resulted from this establishment, was the creation of manufactures at home. The Dutch had formerly supplied the Guinea traders with all the stores for the voyage; but woollen goods and several other important articles of traffic were now produced in Britain for their supply. They exported these to the value of 70,000*l.* per annum.

But the prosperity of this company was of short duration. Among other benefits of the Revolution, the abolition of all monopolies, the gifts of the crown, was obtained. The trade to Africa became free, and the adventurers who embarked in it were numerous. For some time, however, the merchants, who had been disappointed in their prospects of wealth, attempted to maintain the continuation of their monopoly, till, by an act of William and Mary, their right, which before had been virtually, was now expressly cancelled. It was by this act declared lawful for any of his Majesty's liege subjects to trade from Africa to the plantations in America, between Cape Mount and the Cape of Good Hope, upon conditions of paying ten per cent. *ad valorem*, for exported goods, at the time of entry.

It was stipulated by the same act, That any person, for the payment of an additional duty of ten per cent. for the goods imported, should have the still more extensive privilege of trading between Cape Blanco and Cape Mount. The product of these duties was destined for the good of the company.

This law gave general discontent, and innumerable petitions were presented against it. The company prophesied their own ruin, and their fears were likely to be verified; for they had declined so prodigiously in 1739, that the Parliament were obliged to vote 10,000*l.* annually for the space of nine years\*.

In the year 1750, after undergoing so many changes, the African slave trade assumed a new aspect. A law was passed for its encouragement and improvement, of which it is needless to detail the particulars, as the act may be consulted. I shall now proceed to give a brief account of the countries with which this traffic is maintained.

From Loango, St. Paul's in Angola, to Cape Blanco, extends this line of coast to the length of 1300 English leagues.

In the province of Senegambia the British have an establishment. It is watered by the rivers Gambia, navigable for many hundred miles up the country, and inhabited by the Mandingoes.

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\* In the year 1744, the grant was 20,000*l.* which makes up the sum of 100,000*l.* granted by Parliament for the support of the slave trade.

From Roxo to Appollonia, the settlements are principally Portuguese. The natives are called Mandingoes, though different in language.

From Appollonia to the river Volta, the Gold Coast extends for 1000 miles, and is divided into a number of petty states. Shantee, Akim, and Aquambou, three large kingdoms, of which little is known, form the inland country. Over all this coast the language is pretty similar. The natives are denominated the Koromantees, from Koromantyne, a factory very respectable while it remained in possession of the English, but fallen into insignificance since it was taken by the Dutch.

The next division is the Whidaw country, by some denominated the Gold Coast Proper. From Popo, a principality in this division, the natives of Whidaw are, by the British traders, commonly denominated Papaws. Next to this is the great empire of Benin, beginning on the west bank of the river Lagos, and extending as far as Cape Lopez. The negroes on this coast are in general denominated Eboes. A particular tribe are distinguished by the name Mocoës. The language of these is different from any other on the coast.

To the southward of the river Congo, the Portuguese have considerable possessions. They have built and strongly fortified the city of Loango, St. Paul's, and, extending their commerce to the eastern coast, travel with caravans quite across the country.

In reckoning the forts and factories established by



European settlers, we shall find the following number possessed by the following nations :

By the Dutch,	-	15
— the British,	-	40
— the Portuguese,	-	4
— the Danes,	-	4
— the French,	-	3

From Britain there is continual exportation to Africa of woollens, linens ; Sheffield, Birmingham, and Manchester goods ; silks, cottons, cloths, arms, powder, shot, wrought brass and copper, and several other commodities, which annually return to England about 800,000*l*. There is an immunity of trading in few places of Africa. Wherever a brisk trade is kept up, the king, or chief man of the district, claims a duty upon all exports. The exchange of commodities is managed in different ways. Sometimes the British purchaser comes up to the house of the black merchant, but more frequently the ship is made the market-place. The factories established on the coast undertake to procure cargoes for their own vessels ; and the officers of the forts also, according to their circumstances and ability, sell slaves to the Guinea traders in private bargains ; but the natives themselves bring slaves cheaper to market than any in the British establishments.

Previous to the exchange which takes place between the European and the African trader, there is a continued chain of merchants at different distances, up the country, who send them down

to each others hands, from distant places, yet unexplored by any white. Though the trade upon the coast is regular and constant, I am sorry that, from deficiency of accounts, I have not been able to procure a precise estimate of all the Africans who have been, since the first commencement of these settlements, transported into the British West Indies. I shall, however, lay before the reader all the information I have been able to collect; and he may probably be enabled, by his sagacity, to guess at a number not very remote from fact.

It has been strongly asserted by the enemies of the slave trade, and never denied by its abettors, that, from 1680 and 1700, no less than 300,000 Africans were reduced to slavery by British merchants. From the latter period till 1786, there were taken from Africa in all 610,000 into the single island of Jamaica. A proper estimation may be formed in the reader's mind of the number exported, during the same period, to the southern provinces of North America, as well as the Windward Islands. Reckoning on these grounds, we may safely fix the whole number of negroes imported from 1686 till 1786, at 2,130,000. This is a smaller calculation than is usually made, but I apprehend it is founded in truth.

It seems, that before the period of the American war, the slave trade had come to its highest pitch. The following has been given to the public as an accurate account of the ships which sailed from England to the coast of Africa, in 1771, and of the

flaves, for which they were provided. Its authenticity I believe unimpeachable.

		Ships.		Negroes.
To Senegambia,	-	40	for	3310
— Windward Coast,	-	56	—	11960
— Gold Coast,	-	29	—	7525
— Bight of Benin,	-	63	—	23301
— Angola,	-	4	—	1050
		<hr/>		<hr/>
Total,		192	—	47146

Of the above 192 ships		Negroes.
107 failed from Liverpool, for	-	29250
58 — from London, for	-	8136
23 — from Bristol, for	-	8810
4 — from Lancaster, for	-	950

In the year 1772 failed from Great Britain, for the African coast,

175 vessels, having goods on board, valued at - L. 866394 11 3

1773	-	151	-	ditto	-	688110	10	11
1774	-	167	-	ditto	-	846525	12	5
1775	-	152	-	ditto	-	786168	2	8
1776	-	101	-	ditto	-	470779	1	1
1777	-	58	-	ditto	-	239218	3	0
1778	-	41	-	ditto	-	154086	1	10
1779	-	28	-	ditto	-	159217	19	7

This evident falling off can be ascribed to no



other cause than the unfortunate American war. After the termination of it, the trade assumed a brisker turn; as appears by the following account of the negroes imported into and exported from the British West India settlements, from 1783 to 1787, a space of five years.

Year.	No. of ships.	Tons	Negroes imp.	Negr.exp.	Negr.retained.
1783	- 38	- 5455	- 16208	- 809	- 15399
1784	- 93	- 13301	- 28550	- 5263	- 23287
1785	- 73	- 10730	- 21598	- 5018	- 16580
1786	- 67	- 8070	- 19160	- 4317	- 14843
1787	- 85	- 12183	- 21023	- 5366	- 15657

Of the whole number now annually exported from Africa, by the subjects of Great Britain, France, Holland, Denmark, and Portugal, and the particular countries whence supplied, the following account was transmitted by the merchants of Liverpool to the Lords of the Privy Council, and it is undoubtedly as authentic and particular a return as can possibly be obtained, viz.

	No. of slaves exported.
By the British,	- 38000
— French,	- 20000
— Dutch,	- 4000
— Danes,	- 2000
— Portuguese,	- 10000
Total,	74000

No. of slaves.

Of which Gambia furnishes about	-	700
——— Isles Delos, and the adjacent rivers,		1500
From Sierra Leone to Cape Mount,		2000
—— Cape Mount to Cape Palmas,		3000
—— Cape Palmas to C. Appolonia,		1000
——— Gold Coast,	-	10000
——— Quitta and Popo,	-	1000
——— Whidaw,	-	4500
——— Porto Novo, Eppee, and Bidagry,		3500
——— Lagos and Benin,	-	3500
——— Bonny and New Calabar,	-	14500
——— Old Calabar and Cameroons,	-	7000
——— Gabon and Cape Lopez,	-	500
——— Loango, Melimba, and Cape Renda,		13500
——— Majumba, Ambris, and Miffoula,		1000
——— Loango, St. Paul's, and Benguela,		7000
Total,		74200

Extensive and various as the coast is from whence these natives are taken, it is perhaps impossible to discriminate between the character of one nation and that of another. Among slaves there is uniformity of character in every climate on the face of the earth, from the subjection to which they are yoked, and the total want of opportunity to call forth the latent energies of their souls. Well has it been remarked by Homer, that "the day which makes a man a slave takes away half his worth." A person, however, who has lived in

such a situation as to behold and reflect upon the most minute manners of the negro, will be able to observe some shades of distinction which slavery has not effaced. After some observations, therefore, on these features of discrimination, I shall proceed to investigate the negro character in general.



## CHAPTER III.

Mandingoes, or Natives of the Windward Coast—Mahometans—  
Their Wars, Manners, and Persons—Koromantyn Negroes, or  
Negroes of the Gold Coast—Their Ferociousness of Disposition  
displayed in an Account of the Negro Rebellion in Jamaica in  
1760—Their National Manners, Wars, and Superstitions—Na-  
tives of Whidaw or Fida—Their Good Qualities—Natives from  
Benin—Persons and Tempers—Cannibals—Natives of Congo  
and Angola—Survey of the Characters and Dispositions of Ne-  
groes in a State of Slavery.

OVER all Africa to the westward and northward of  
Sierra Leone, the natives are Mahometans in their  
religious faith. In strict imitation of the founder  
of their religion, they are perpetually at war with  
the nations around them in order to enforce  
their creed. The prisoners, therefore, taken in  
these religious wars, cannot surely be said to be  
harshly used, when it is so likely they would suffer  
death from the vengeance of their enemies were  
they not ransomed by the factories. I am inclined  
to suppose that, when they fight among themselves,  
the Mandingoes are impelled by lucrative motives,  
that is, to serve the merchants on the coast with  
such prisoners as they can surprise and take. These  
they carry down from great distances to the sea-  
coast, and dispose of to the best advantage\*.

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\* This Mr. Edwards relates upon the authority of a slave from  
whose mouth he wrote down the relation. The slave himself had

The Mandingoes, though divided into many tribes, very different in appearance, have yet a national conformation of person, and easily known from the natives of a different part of Africa. Some tribes among them are tall above the common rate of negroes. It is remarkable in all the Mandingoes, that they are less disgusting in features, and more free from a fetid smell, than any other Africans. They are, with all these good qualities, indifferent performers of any work they are set to.

The Koromantyn negroes come next under consideration. Their characteristic distinction is a firmness of body and mind, which modern ideas of superiority would denominate ferociousness, but which the ancients would have called by the appropriate term that comprehends all the virtues. They encounter danger and death without seeming to shrink. They have constitutions fitted for the severest labour, and from custom appear not averse to employment. Of these negroes there are many

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been kidnapped by some of the Mandingoes, and sold to a ship bound for Jamaica. Having left his country very young, he could not relate many circumstances about the peculiar manners of the natives, but recollected that they practised circumcision, and were exceedingly superstitious. He chanted a sentence which Mr. Edwards supposed to be the Arabic *La Illa ill Illa* (there is no God but God) in the Alcoran. On Friday, he said, they fasted with great devotion, and (in his own phrase) it was almost held a sin to swallow their spittle on that day. Mr. Edwards also relates that he had another servant who could write the Arabic alphabet very beautifully and exactly, and some select passages of the Alcoran.

who, in being reduced to West Indian slavery, only make a change of masters, as those whom I questioned most minutely on the subject, and on whose veracity I could principally depend, informed me that they had been sold by their owners to the Guinea traders. But in the private wars of one state with another among these Koromantyn Africans, it must frequently happen that those of superior station, and who are themselves possessors of slaves, should be taken in battle. That such people, when sold into slavery, should manifest the most enterprising attempts to take vengeance on their enslavers, is not to be wondered at. We find, accordingly, that not many years ago, when a rebellion broke out in Jamaica, in 1761, it was instigated and led on by an intrepid negro of this description, who had been a chief in his own country on the coast. It broke out on the frontiers of St. Mary's parish, and had not great courage and conduct been displayed on this occasion by a gentleman who resided in that quarter, Mr. Zachary Bayly, it cannot be doubted but that the revolt would have been wide and destructive. We should not omit mentioning a fact which occurred at this period, and which reflects much honour upon the insurgents themselves, as well as on the individual to whom the act of generosity was shown. Abraham Fletcher was the overseer on the estate of the above mentioned gentleman, Mr. Bayly, and during all his administration had behaved to the negroes with justice and humanity. We have seldom seen



these virtues respected by barbarous men during a period of revolt. Their minds are so harassed by the emotions of fear and revenge, that they forget to discriminate the innocent from the guilty. This was not, however, the case with the Koromantyn rebels. They had Fletcher in their possession; and had his past conduct been in any shape deserving of reproach, he must have severely atoned for it now; but in consideration of his good qualities, they gave him his life. They did not, however, continue in the display of such moderation: Proceeding to Port Maria, they provided themselves with ammunition and arms, and being joined in their route by several companies of their countrymen, proceeded by the highway to the interior of the country, carrying murder and destruction as they went. In the mean time, Mr. Bayly, who had in vain endeavoured to approach and pacify them, by applying persuasion instead of force, finding there was no safety but in severe measures, collected a body of 100 whites and faithful blacks, and sending round the plantations to alarm the inhabitants of their danger, led on his party to retaliate hostilities on the rebels. He came up with them at last, attacked them, and taking many prisoners, drove the rest into the woods. By another party that went out in pursuit of the negroes, Tacky, the Koromantyn chief, who had roused up and led on his countrymen to revolt, was killed in a skirmish. Some dreadful examples were then made of such as were taken and convicted of being engaged in

the massacres which had been perpetrated. Of three that suffered most severely, one was burnt alive, the other two were hung in chains alive, and left to perish in that dismal situation. With astonishing firmness did these unfortunate victims brave the severity of their punishments. The two, in particular, who were exposed in chains, though nine days, lingering in hunger and pain, seemed unaffected by their hardship, and even mixed with the conversation of the surrounding negroes. On the seventh day, when one would suppose their torture to have become intense, they were observed to laugh immoderately at something that was said.

To what shall we ascribe this iron fortitude of mind? Undoubtedly to their manners, and the unlimited barbarity which the savage possessors of slaves on the coast of Africa exercise over their subjects. Accustomed to the horrors of war from their infancy, inured to hardship by the severities they endure, and taught to look upon death and cruelties, till these lose the power of impressing them, they grow regardless of life, and unfeeling for themselves and others. Their barbarity is not confined to their prisoners\*; the father is barbarously severe to his children, and the friends of the deceased husband sacrifice, without remorse, his wives and slaves at his burial.

It is true, however, that, when they revolve to

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\* The usual mode of treating these is, to tear away the under jaw, and leave them to expire in that dreadful situation.

humane masters in the West Indies, they gradually lose that contempt for death, and, from actually advancing higher in the scale of happiness, grow less ferociously cruel, and more attached to existence. A Jamaica gentleman visiting a sick Koromantyn negro, asked him why he was afraid to die? The negro, in broken English, replied, that, in his own country, he used to despise death; but since he came to the West Indies, had learnt to know the value of life.

At a very early period of life does this superior hardiness of mind and body discover itself in the Koromantyn negro. A gentleman in Jamaica, who had purchased twenty young Africans, ten Koromantyns, and ten Eboes, ordered them to be marked with a silver brand on the breast. The operation is by no means severe; for the silver being dipped in the spirits of wine, and applied to the skin, the pain is of no continuance. But the Eboes believing it to be excessively painful, screamed out in terror, and the gentleman desisted from the operation. The Koromantyn youths, to manifest their contempt of the operation, voluntarily slept up, and underwent the impression without symptoms of apprehension.

Whatever inhumanity these people may display when they have an opportunity of revenge, I think it indisputably evident, that they frequently discover marks of a truly energetic mind, which, it is to be regretted, has no opportunities of exercising itself in generous and noble virtues while kept in a state of



subjection. I shall conclude my observations with giving a concise account of their religious tenets.

They believe in a Supreme Being, the God of the Heavens, and the Creator of the Universe, whom they denominate Accompong. They pray to him and adore him; but offer no sacrifices along with their worship.

To the god of the earth, *Affaru*, they offer the fruits of the ground; to *Ipboa* they sacrifice a hog; and to *Obboney*, their malicious diety, they offer up human sacrifices, captives of slaves.

They have their household gods, like the ancients, who is supposed to have been once a human being like themselves. To these they sacrifice a cock or a goat, upon the grave where they are supposed to have been buried, and then relax themselves in a social festival.

Their oaths are administered in a manner very impressive to a superstitious mind. The person sworn drinks water mixed with human blood and earth from the grave of a near friend, wishing that his belly may burst, and his bones rot, if he speak not truth. It strongly resembles the oath of bitter water among the Israelites.

The negroes of Whidaw or Fida are beyond doubt the most valuable negroes imported to our islands. They engage in every work with alacrity; and, from being accustomed to agriculture at home, are useful labourers of the ground. They have not the fierce temper of the people last described, and are also happily free from the melancholy cast of

temper so prevalent among the Eboes. We are told that the kingdom of Whidaw is industriously cultivated, and is covered with villages and farms.

In their contempt of pain and death they are widely different from the Koromantyns. They hear not the very name of death without an emotion; and it is accounted a mark of rudeness, and severely punishable, to mention the term in presence of a respectable personage. They submit to the authority of the West Indian possessor with patience and complacency, esteeming it the duty of their master to punish, and their's to obey.

Among many of the Whidaw negroes, and in particular the tribe called Nagoes, circumcision is practised; but there are a number of tribes who know nothing of such a custom.

The Eboes, or Mocoës, are the natives of Benin, a vast coast, 3000 miles in length. The complexion of this people is universally sickly, and the conformation of the face bears a strong resemblance to the baboon. Natural historians have remarked, that man is more obtuse in the figure of the lower part of his face than any other animal; but that the greater obtuseness in the face of an European indicates in him a superiority of mental powers, or that the Eboe may consequently be considered as akin to the intellect as well as the visage of the baboon, is a conclusion I am not warranted to draw.

The desponding temper of the Eboe makes him less valuable to a master than the race formerly described; for, when in danger of hardship, or severity

of punishment, they prefer a voluntary death to enduring it. From the melancholy dejection apparent in the countenances of these people, a spectator would be apt to conclude them more refined in their dispositions than any other tribe. But the reader will be convinced to the contrary, when he learns that, so far from being civilized, the Mocoës, in their own country, are habitually cannibals. This fact is evidenced by the confession of a Mocoe slave, who acknowledged that he had frequently shared such repasts; and by the well known trial of two negroes in Antigua, who, in 1770, were tried and condemned for murdering and devouring a fellow slave.

The Eboës are grossly superstitious in their religious belief, the lizard being one of their first-rate divinities. The presence of this animal is held so sacred, that every violation of its dignity is punished as a crime. An unfortunate instance of this was met with in 1787, when two seamen of a vessel trading to that coast went ashore for water, and, by accident, killed a Guiana-lizard. They were instantly seized and adjudged to die. A ransom was offered, but not sufficient to satisfy the avidity of the Mocoës, who insisted on a larger sum. The captain (certainly no very humane man) did not choose to purchase their lives at so dear a rate, and accordingly abandoned them to the mercy of the natives. What became of them was never known.

The negroes of Congo and Angola come next to be considered. Their character is not strongly



marked : They are slender and lightly, with very black hair and skin. From their mildness and docility they are most useful as domestics. They are also honest and more ingenious than the generality of other Africans.

We have mentioned before, that whatever national traits the negroes of different parts of Africa may have, they are, by their situation as slaves, in a great measure reduced to one common standard of debasement. We shall therefore proceed to embrace the whole varieties of the negro character in one description.

It is true, the Koromantyn negroes, as was formerly mentioned, are a brave people, speaking of them comparatively with their brother Africans ; but the opposite qualities seem generally predominant in the negro mind. The African has no candour in his dispositions. When asked a question, he hesitates, and answers circuitously, that he may have time to prepare a convenient reply. In thieving they are equally expert as in prevarication.

This propensity to vices of the vilest nature is undoubtedly the result of their slavery. Still they are indebted to that same cause for one of the most amiable qualities in the human heart ; I mean the compassion they feel for companions in the same distress with themselves. The man who has been a shipmate with the negro during his passage from Africa, becomes his dear and inviolable friend ; and even the name Shipmate expresses among them every tender idea of regard. Within this sphere,

however, the benevolence of the negro is generally confined. To each other they are inexorably severe when an opportunity presents. Should a young negro become the apprentice of an old one, no words can express the misery he endures from the merciless barbarity of his countryman.

Nor are they more humane even to the affectionately faithful dog which follows them. Every negro seems provided with an animal of this species, merely for the purpose of venting his malice on a being who cannot retort an injury. It is very remarkable, that the poor animal itself grows conscious that he has become the slave of a slave. His generous nature is degraded; he loses all his sportive gambols, and grows sullen, crouching, and suspicious.

Historians, fond to describe every thing in its most pleasing colours, represent the negro as susceptible of the passion of love in a strong and sublimated degree. Monsieur de Chanvalon exclaims, "Love, the child of nature, to whom she intrusts her preservation, whose progress no difficulties can retard, and who triumphs even in chains, inspires the negro amid all his misery. No perils can abate, nor impending punishments restrain, the ardour of his passion. He leaves his master's habitation by night, and, traversing the wilderness, disregarding of its noxious inhabitants, seeks a refuge from his sorrows in the bosom of his faithful and affectionate mistress."

But this description is as extravagant as it is elo-

quent. If by love we mean that fondness for an individual object, heightened by sentiment, and refined by esteem, I am afraid the negro will be found wholly defective in such a passion. Notwithstanding all that has been said upon the propriety of instituting marriage in the West Indies, I am assured that the negro would regard a permanent connection of this nature as the severest punishment you could inflict. If, on the other hand, we mean by love the animal instinct which blindly impels to gratification of this instinct, the negro has a sufficient share. They indulge this passion without reserve or limitation, considering the change of its objects as a necessary requisite to the completion of enjoyment.

It is true, indeed, in old age they begin to lose this predilection for change, and the attachment which began in desire, is by habit converted into friendship. Their old age thus becomes comfortable from a mutual exchange of good offices.

Indeed, considering all circumstances, the old age of a negro is easy and happy. The duty of the men is to guard the provision-grounds of the women, and to minister to the sick. The aged negro, in addition to the alleviation of his work, at the same time enjoys a respect from his countrymen highly gratifying to his pride, and a tenderness of usage very conducive to his comfort. Sad must the times be, when he is suffered to want. Amid all the barbarity of the African character, the virtue of respect for age shines forth with a lustre which almost excuses his vices. It is held as a strong and



sacred duty, which it were impious to omit, and but common justice to perform. From this tenderness to old age, it happens that instances of longevity, almost inconsistent with such a warm latitude, are frequent here. At Savannah la Mar in Jamaica, a black woman died, in 1792, at the extreme age of 120 years.

The fondness which the negro discovers to be distinguished as an orator, is a remarkable propensity in his character. They delight in set speeches, which have usually very fatiguing prefaces; and if you grant them a hearing, they will amuse you at great length on their own merits, hardships, and circumstances. Much, however, as they are addicted to circumlocution, they often compress their meaning into strong and astonishing sentences\*.

It is a prevalent opinion in Europe, that the African ear is peculiarly constructed for music, but the assertion is plainly unjust; for I believe there will hardly be found an instance of a negro having been a capital performer in music, though much pains have often been used to instruct them in the science. In fact, they prefer loudness to harmony, and are more delighted with their native potanga, a dismal sounding guittar with four notes; the

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\* Mr. Edwards gives an instance of this in a negro, who, after much fatigue, was sleeping on the floor beside him while he was finishing a letter, and who could not be awakened by his repeated calls. Another servant attempted to rouse him, and exclaimed, "*You no hear massa.*" To which he replied, opening his eyes and closing them again, "*Sleep hab no massa* (sleep has no master)."

dundo, or tabor; and their goombay, which is a harsh rustic drum. Their songs no way poetical, are sung extempore. Their tunes are various, and though not fine, have yet a pleasing vein of melancholy. Songs of a different cast are sung at their festivals; these are either satirical or abounding in obscenity, and accompanied with dances equally indecent.

At the funeral of a respected friend, they exercise themselves in a martial dance, somewhat akin to the pyrrhic of the ancients, and accompany the ceremony with loud and warlike music. From this demonstration of joy may have probably originated the rooted opinion among Europeans, that the negroes regard death as a happy event, and look forward to their deliverance from slavery and life with a satisfied eye. I am well aware, however, that they consider death as no such welcome visitation; and that with all the evils of their life, they wish to stay as long as possible from the state of bliss which they are imagined to anticipate. Among negroes any time resident in the West Indies, suicide is much less frequent than among free and refined Britons. When such a crime is ever perpetrated, they never speak of it as an action of prudence or resolution, but ascribe it to the instigations of the evil spirit Obeah.

The mention of this name induces me to take notice of a very prevalent belief among the negroes. I cannot do this in a better manner than by inserting entire the report of the agent of Jamaica to the

commissioners appointed to examine into the slave trade, and which was, I believe, discovered by Mr. Long.

“ The term Obeah, Obiah, or Obia (for it is variously written) we conceive to be the adjective, and Obe or Obi the noun substantive; and that by the words Obia-men or women, are meant those who practise Obi. The origin of the term we should consider as of no importance in our answer to the questions proposed, if, in search of it, we were not led to disquisitions that are highly gratifying to curiosity. From the learned Mr. Bryant’s commentary upon the word Oph, we obtain a very probable etymology of the term—“ A serpent, in the Egyptian language, “ was called Ob or Aub.”—“ Obion is still the “ Egyptian name for a serpent.”—“ Moses, in the “ name of God, forbids the Israelites ever to inquire “ of the demon Ob, which is translated in our Bible “ Charmer or Wizard, Divinator aut Sorcilegus.”—“ The woman at Endor is called Oub or Ob, translated Pythonissa; and Oubaios (he cites from “ Horus Apollo) was the name of the basilisk or “ royal serpent, emblem of the sun, and an ancient “ oracular deity of Africa.” This derivation, which applies to one particular sect, the remnant probably of a very celebrated religious order in remote ages, is now become in Jamaica the general term to denote those Africans who in that island practise witchcraft or sorcery, comprehending also the class of what are called Myal-men, or those who, by means of a narcotic potion, made with the juice of an herb



(said to be the branched calalue or species of *solanum*) which occasions a trance or profound sleep of a certain duration, endeavour to convince the deluded spectators of their power to reanimate dead bodies.

“ As far as we are able to decide from our own experience and information when we lived in the island, and from the current testimony of all the negroes we have ever conversed with on the subject, the professors of Obi are, and always were, natives of Africa, and none other; and they have brought the science with them from thence to Jamaica, where it is so universally practised, that we believe there are few of the large estates possessing native Africans, which have not one or more of them. The oldest and most crafty are those who usually attract the greatest devotion and confidence; those whose hoary heads, and a somewhat peculiarly harsh and forbidding in their aspect, together with some skill in plants of the medicinal and poisonous species, have qualified them for successful imposition upon the weak and credulous. The negroes in general, whether Africans or Creoles, revere, consult, and fear them; to these oracles they resort, and with the most implicit faith upon all occasions, whether for the cure of disorders, the obtaining revenge for injuries or insults, the conciliating of favour, the discovery and punishment of the thief or the adulterer, and the prediction of future events. The trade which these impostors carry on is extremely lucrative; they manufacture and sell their

Obies adapted to different cases and at different prices. A veil of mystery is studiously thrown over their incantations, to which the midnight hours are allotted, and every precaution is taken to conceal them from the knowledge and discovery of the white people. The deluded negroes, who thoroughly believe in their supernatural power, become the willing accomplices in this concealment, and the stoutest among them tremble at the very sight of the ragged bundle, the bottle or the egg-shells, which are stuck in the thatch or hung over the door of a hut, or upon the branch of a plaintain tree, to deter marauders. In cases of poison, the natural effects of it are by the ignorant negroes ascribed entirely to the potent workings of Obi. The wiser negroes hesitate to reveal their suspicions, through a dread of incurring the terrible vengeance which is fulminated by the Obeah-men against any who should betray them: it is very difficult therefore for the white proprietor to distinguish the Obeah professor from any other negro upon his plantation; and so infatuated are the blacks in general, that but few instances occur of their having assumed courage enough to impeach these miscreants. With minds so firmly prepossessed, they no sooner find Obi set for them near the door of their house, or in the path which leads to it, than they give themselves up for lost. When a negro is robbed of a fowl or a hog, he applies directly to the Obeah man or woman; it is then made known among his fellow blacks, that Obi is set for the thief; and as soon as the latter hears

the dreadful news, his terrified imagination begins to work, no resource is left but in the superior skill of some more eminent Obeah-man of the neighbourhood, who may counteract the magical operations of the other; but if no one can be found of higher rank and ability, or if, after gaining such an ally, he should still fancy himself affected, he presently falls into a decline, under the incessant horror of impending calamities. The slightest painful sensation in the head, the bowels, or any other part, any casual loss or hurt, confirms his apprehensions, and he believes himself the devoted victim of an invisible and irresistible agency. Sleep, appetite, and cheerfulness forsake him, his strength decays, his disturbed imagination is haunted without respite, his features wear the settled gloom of despondency: dirt, or any other unwholesome substance, become his only food, he contracts a morbid habit of body, and gradually sinks into the grave. A negro, who is taken ill, inquires of the Obeah-man the cause of his sickness, whether it will prove mortal or not, and within what time he shall die or recover? The oracle generally describes the distemper to the malice of some particular person by name, and advises to set Obi for that person; but if no hopes are given of recovery, immediate despair takes place, which no medicine can remove, and death is the certain consequence. Those anomalous symptoms which originate from causes deeply rooted in the mind, such as the terrors of Obi, or from poisons, whose operation is slow and



intricate, will baffle the skill of the ablest physician.

“ Considering the multitude of occasions which may provoke the negroes to exercise the powers of Obi against each other, and the astonishing influence of this superstition upon their minds, we cannot but attribute a very considerable portion of the annual mortality among the negroes of Jamaica to this fascinating mischief.

“ The Obi is usually composed of a farrago of materials, most of which are enumerated in the Jamaica law, viz. “ Blood, feathers, parrots beaks, “ dogs teeth, alligators teeth, broken bottles, grave-  
“ dirt, rum, and egg-shells.”

“ With a view to illustrate the description we have given of this practice, and its common effects, we have subjoined a few examples out of the very great number which have occurred in Jamaica; not that they are peculiar to that island only, for we believe similar examples may be found in other West India colonies. Pere Labat, in his history of Martinico, has mentioned some which are very remarkable.

“ It may seem extraordinary, that a practice alleged to be so frequent in Jamaica should not have received an earlier check from the legislature. The truth is, that the skill of some negroes, in the art of poisoning, has been noticed ever since the colonists became much acquainted with them. Sloane and Barham, who practised physic in Jamaica in the last century, have mentioned parti-

cular instances of it. The secret and insidious manner in which this crime is generally perpetrated, makes the legal proof of it extremely difficult. Suspicions therefore have been frequent, but detections rare; these murderers have sometimes been brought to justice, but it is reasonable to believe that a far greater number have escaped with impunity. In regard to the other and more common tricks of Obi, such as hanging up feathers, bottles, egg-shells, &c. &c. in order to intimidate negroes of a thievish disposition from plundering huts, hog-styes, or provision-grounds, these were laughed at by the white inhabitants as harmless stratagems, contrived by the more sagacious, for deterring the more simple and superstitious blacks, and serving for much the same purpose as the scare-crows which are in general used among our English farmers and gardeners. But in the year 1760, when a very formidable insurrection of the Koromantyn or Gold Coast negroes broke out in the parish of St. Mary, and spread through almost every other district of the island, an old Koromantyn negro, the chief instigator and oracle of the insurgents in that parish, who had administered the fetich or solemn oath to the conspirators, and furnished them with a magical preparation which was to render them invulnerable, was fortunately apprehended, convicted, and hung up with all his feathers and trumperies about him; and his execution struck the insurgents with a general panic, from which they never afterwards recovered. The

examinations which were taken at that period, first opened the eyes of the public to the very dangerous tendency of the Obeah practices, and gave birth to the law which was then enacted for their suppression and punishment. But neither the terror of this law, the strict investigation which has ever since been made after the professors of Obi, nor the many examples of those who from time to time have been hanged or transported, have hitherto produced the desired effect. We conclude, therefore, that either this sect, like others in the world, has flourished under persecution; or that fresh supplies are annually introduced from the African seminaries.

*The following is the Paper referred to in the preceding Account.*

#### OBEAH PRACTICE.

“WE have the following narratives from a planter in Jamaica, a gentleman of the strictest veracity, who is now in London, and ready to attest the truth of them.

“Upon returning to Jamaica in the year 1775, he found that a great many of his negroes had died during his absence; and that of such as remained alive, at least one half were debilitated, bloated, and in a very deplorable condition. The mortality continued after his arrival, and two or three were frequently buried in one day; others were taken ill, and began to decline under the same symptoms.



Every means were tried by medicines, and the most careful nursing, to preserve the lives of the feeblest ; but in spite of all his endeavours, this depopulation went on for above a twelvemonth longer, with more or less intermission, and without his being able to ascertain the real cause, though the Obeah practice was strongly suspected, as well by himself, as by the doctor and other white persons upon the plantation, as it was known to have been very common in that part of the island, and particularly among the negroes of the Papaw or Popo country. Still he was unable to verify his suspicions, because the patients constantly denied their having any thing to do with persons of that order, or any knowledge of them. At length a negress, who had been ill for some time, came one day and informed him, that feeling it was impossible for her to live much longer, she thought herself bound in duty, before she died, to impart a very great secret, and acquaint him with the true cause of her disorder, in hopes that the disclosure might prove the means of stopping that mischief, which had already swept away such a number of her fellow-slaves. She proceeded to say, that her step-mother (a woman of the Popo country, above 80 years old, but still hale and active) had put Obi upon her, as she had also done upon those who had lately died ; and that the old woman had practised Obi for as many years past as she could remember.

“ The other negroes of the plantation no sooner heard of this impeachment, than they ran in a body to their master, and confirmed the truth of it, ad-

ding, that she had carried on this business ever since her arrival from Africa, and was the terror of the whole neighbourhood. Upon this he repaired directly, with six white servants, to the old woman's house, and forcing open the door, observed the whole inside of the roof (which was of thatch) and every crevice of the walls stuck with the implements of her trade, consisting of rags, feathers, bones of cats, and a thousand other articles. Examining further, a large earthen pot or jar, close covered, was found concealed under her bed. It contained a prodigious quantity of round balls of earth or clay of various dimensions, large and small, whitened on the outside, and variously compounded, some with hair and rags, or feathers of all sorts, and strongly bound with twine; others blended with the upper section of the skulls of cats, or stuck round with cats teeth and claws, or with human or dogs teeth, and some glass beads of different colours; there were also a great many egg-shells filled with a viscous or gummy substance, the qualities of which he neglected to examine, and many little bags stuffed with a variety of articles, the particulars of which cannot at this distance of time be recollected. The house was instantly pulled down, and with the whole of its contents committed to the flames, amidst the general acclamations of all his other negroes. In regard to the old woman, he declined bringing her to trial under the law of the island, which would have punished her with death; but, from a principle of humanity, delivered her into the hands of a party of

Spaniards, who (as she was thought not incapable of doing some trifling kind of work) were very glad to accept and carry her with them to Cuba. From the moment of her departure, his negroes seemed all to be animated with new spirits, and the malady spread no further among them. The total of his losses in the course of about 15 years preceding the discovery, and imputable solely to the Obeah practice, he estimates at least at 100 negroes.

#### OBEAH TRIALS.

“ HAVING received some further information upon this subject, from another Jamaica gentleman, who sat upon two trials, we beg leave to deliver the same in his own words, as a supplement to what we have already had the honour of submitting.

“ In the year 1760, the influence of the professors of the Obeah art was such, as to induce a great many of the negro slaves in Jamaica to engage in the rebellion which happened in that year, and which gave rise to the law which was then made against the practice of Obi.

“ Assurance was given to these deluded people, that they were to become invulnerable ; and in order to render them so, the Obeah men furnished them with a powder, with which they were to rub themselves.

“ In the first engagement with the rebels, nine of them were killed, and many prisoners taken ; amongst the latter was one very intelligent fellow, who offered to disclose many important matters, on



condition that his life should be spared ; which was promised. He then related the active part which the negroes, known among them by the name of Obeah men, had taken in propagating the insurrection ; one of whom was thereupon apprehended, tried (for rebellious conspiracy), convicted, and sentenced to death.

“ N. B. This was the Koromantyn Obeah man alluded to in our first paper.

“ At the place of execution, he bid defiance to the executioner, telling him, that “ it was not in the “ power of the white people to kill him.” And the negroes (spectators) were greatly perplexed when they saw him expire. Upon other Obeah men, who were apprehended at that time, various experiments were made with electrical machines and magic lanterns, but with very little effect, except on one, who, after receiving some very severe shocks, acknowledged that “ his master’s Obi exceeded his own.”

“ The gentleman from whom we have this account, remembers having sat twice on trials of Obeah men, who were both convicted of selling their Obeah preparations, which had occasioned the death of the parties to whom they had been administered ; notwithstanding which, the lenity of their judges prevailed so far, that they were only punished with transportation. To prove the fact, two witnesses were deemed necessary, with corroborating circumstances.”

## CHAPTER IV.

Means of obtaining Slaves in Africa—Observations thereon—Objections to a direct and immediate Abolition of the Trade by the British Nation only—The Consequences of such a Measure considered—Disproportion of Sexes in the Negroes annually imported from Africa—Mode of transporting Negroes, and Regulations recently established by Act of Parliament—Effects of those Regulations.

IN calculating the supplies of negroes which might probably be collected from Africa by the various modes which are said to be used for that purpose, we cannot assign a greater number than 74,000 individuals. It is left, therefore, to inquire by what means the remaining number are obtained. In answer to this inquiry, it has been stated by those who are most minutely acquainted with the slave trade, that not only the people upon the coast, but also those in the interior of Africa, are subjected to unlimited tyranny either of a monarchical or aristocratical kind; on which account the subjected slave very frequently, as a punishment for his crimes, is taken to the Guinea merchant, and if refused, is put to death. Those fathers who are free themselves, have unlimited power over their children; but in the few instances where such power is converted to a bad purpose, the public detestation is very strong against the vender of his children. The free man himself may, by many circumstances, be degraded to the rank of a slave; such as debt, adultery, and the ima-

ginary crime of obi or witchcraft; and in cases of this nature, the friends of the accused are involved in a common fate.

The above account has been given by a number of witnesses, but their evidence is disputed in many points by witnesses no less respectable. It has been asserted by Mr. Penny, among others, that except in the instance of delinquency, the African master is not allowed to take his slave to the market; and that by intestine war the greater proportion is procured. But Mr. Edwards, by the testimony of several negroes, whom he examined under such circumstances as leave no doubt that their evidence could be false, seems to have substantiated very distinctly the former allegation; namely, that the power and the practice of selling slaves, without the imputation of a crime, is common among the African masters\*.

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\* We have subjoined a few of the relations of those who were examined.

Adam, a Congo boy, who was stolen from his father's house, and who, after being marched down the country for the space of a month, was sold from one black merchant to another, sometimes for one article, and sometimes for another, till he came into the hands of the Guinea trader.

Quaw and Quamina, two brothers, aged 18 and 20, from the Gold Coast, on being asked the cause of their being sold, replied, That their master was in debt, and that they were sold to relieve him.

Afiba, a Gold Coast girl, was sold by her master, along with some others, for a quantity of linen and other articles.

Yamoufa, a Chambie youth, was sold by his possessor, along with a cow, for a gun and some other articles.



Mr. Edwards examined 25 young persons of both sexes, of whom 15 confessed they had been born to slavery in their own country, and five said they had been kidnapped from home; and it appeared by the accounts of the other five that they had been the prisoners of internal war. It must be observed, that the evidence of these negroes is highly creditable, from its being taken by Mr. Edwards at various times, so that he had an opportunity of discovering if they enlarged upon the truth by the inconsistency of their narrations.

Such are the means by which the West India islands are supplied with their African slaves. Every feeling mind will no doubt regret the existence of a commerce which devotes so many human beings to be expatriated and enslaved; but our horror is assuaged to remember, that of these the greater proportion only exchange to a milder slavery.

That the trade encourages a spirit of rapine among the natives cannot be denied; at the same time it deserves consideration, whether partially

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Oliver, from Asientee, aged about 22, was the son of a free carpenter, and had been taken prisoner in an attack of the Frankees. He was transferred through the hands of six black merchants before he was sold to the shipmaster.

Efther, a girl from the Ebo country, relates, That she lived about a day's journey from the sea coast; but being on a visit to her grandmother, the village was attacked by a body of negroes (she knows not of what nation), her grandmother, with the other aged persons, were put to death, and herself taken to the coast, and sold.

and suddenly to abolish the existence of the commerce would not be productive of real disadvantages, in place of effecting the end desired by those who are eager for such strong and speedy measures? For solving this important question, we must take into view, not only the situation of the slaves in Africa, but of those already in the West Indies.

In the *first* place, It is false reasoning to suppose that Britain, withdrawing her share from the general demand, will effect a decrease of the quantity brought to the market; for although in other kinds of commerce the supply is generally regulated by the demand, yet in this instance the rule will not hold. When two African states are at war, the captives are dealt with in proportion to their strength and appearance. The old and infirm are massacred on the spot; such as are able to travel a long journey are led to the sea-coast, and of these all who are rejected are immediately put to death. From this it appears, that were Britain to withdraw her demand, there would be left a superabundance of about 38,000 every year, who, unless bought up by other nations, must inevitably be sacrificed to the disappointed avarice of the black trader. Instances, indeed, of this barbarous practice are so numerous, that they have been frequently perpetrated in sight of our own shipping; so that in this case the remedy becomes abundantly more horrible than the disease.

*Secondly*, Let an unprejudiced mind reflect upon the situation of the remaining negroes, in the West

Indies, who are supposed to continue in a state of servitude. It is a fact too little attended to, that the disparity between males and females is so great in these islands, that without a new supply of women the race must at last become extinct. Besides, it should be remembered, that numberless estates are burdened with covenants of supplying yearly to British merchants a certain quantity of rum and sugar. Picture, then, the condition of a West India planter perpetually dunned for his covenanted supply, and unable, with the utmost stretch of his industry, to effect his engagement with a decaying stock of labourers. The slaves themselves will also gradually come to feel the hardship of such an institution. At first the work of 20 is performed by 19, till at last the task of that number becomes the task of a very few. In this case, they are either wrought beyond their strength, or they are goaded into rebellion, or the planter is circumscribed in the ground he lays under cultivation, and is thus incapacitated from the payment of his just debts. These distresses are not drawn by the imagination; they existed in Demerara, in all their severity, at the period when the prohibition was laid upon importing slaves.

It thus appears evident, that a direct abolition, effected by a single nation, would neither abate the sale of those miserable victims who are transported to the West Indies, nor would it attenuate (nay, it would severely augment) the hardships of those who are there already. In addition to the above



forcible arguments, we may add this single consideration, which certainly merits very serious attention. As long as the mutual temptation to sell and to buy slaves continues, there will very probably be both European purchasers and African vendors, in spite of all the decisions even of Europe combined in a system of restraining it. And it need hardly be called up to the remembrance of any man in the smallest acquainted with the West Indies, that an attempt towards prohibiting illicit importation would be, from the nature of the country, impracticable and absurd.

The mode of conveying the Africans from their own country to the West Indies is a subject too important to be overlooked. Before entering upon this part, however, I shall offer a few observations on the disproportion of sexes, to which I before alluded. Mr. Barnes, a gentleman of very respectable authority, gives us the following sensible reasons, which may evince that the disparity is not the fault of the purchasers, but that it originates from other causes.

“ The disproportion in the number of male and female slaves exported from Africa (says Mr. Barnes\*) appears to me to be imputable to the three following causes: *First*, To the practice of polygamy which prevails throughout Africa. *Secondly*, To some of the very causes of slavery itself; men are more apt to commit civil offences than women, and

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\* Report of the Committee of Council, 1789.

in all such cases, where males and females are involved in the same calamity, the first cause still has its operation: the young females are kept for wives, and the males are sold for slaves. *Thirdly*, To the circumstance that females become unfit for the slave market at a much earlier period than the males. A woman, through child-bearing, may appear a very exceptionable slave at 22 or 23 years of age, whereas a healthy well-made man will not be objected to at 34 or 35; consequently, if an equal number of males and females of like ages were offered for sale, a much greater proportion of the females would be rejected on that account only. With regard to the question, whether the European traders prefer purchasing males rather than females? I have to observe, that though it is impossible to conduct the business, either of a house or of a plantation, without a number of females, yet as the nature of the slave service in the West Indies (being chiefly field labour) requires for the immediate interest of the planter, a greater number of males, the European trader would of course wish to purchase his assortment according to the proportion wanted; but the fact is, *he has not an option in the case*, for the reasons already mentioned; so that in most parts of Africa it is with great difficulty he can get as many saleable females as will form any tolerable assortment."

During the late examination before the Privy Council, upon the subject of the slave trade, a number of shocking instances were given to prove that

the usage of slaves on board the Guinea ships was inhuman and severe; but it has since appeared, that the assertors of these facts were men so disreputable in character as to give but little recommendation to their stories. It is true, they are confined in irons, but that severity is exercised in no greater degree than necessity requires, and the young women and children are not under the smallest restraint. They are lodged upon deck between clean boards, and their apartments are regularly fumigated and cleaned. The greatest attention is paid to their health and their diet. Their meals are such vegetables and grains as they have been accustomed to in their own country, which are agreeably seasoned with sauce of meat, fish, or palm oil. Every meal is as plentiful as they choose, and if the weather be cold or wet, is accompanied with a dram. To conclude, if they should fall sick, they are treated with tenderness and care, and are removed either to the captain's cabin or a place appointed for their reception in the fore-castle.

By an act of the 28th of his present Majesty, which has been since amended, strict limitations have been made with respect to the proportion of the cargo to the slave-ship. They are also obliged to be provided with a regularly qualified surgeon, and a premium, of a very respectable amount, is held out to the surgeon and the master, if there be no more than a mortality of two in the hundred at the conclusion of their voyage.

We may form a favourable opinion of the effect



of those benevolent institutions, when it is mentioned as a single instance of the melioration produced, that at Montego Bay, from 1789 to 1791, the average loss of 38 Guineamen was somewhat less than seven per cent. Of these, eight were entitled to the full reward of 50 for only two per cent. mortality; two received a half premium, and one schooner had not a single loss during her voyage. But perhaps a more striking illustration of the point arises from the fall of the mortality in the West Indian harbours: Of 9993 negroes imported into Montego in the space before mentioned, the loss was not quite three-fourths per cent.

It must be, however, confessed, that in spite of all these precautions a dreadful mortality frequently prevails on board the Guinea ships. The mischief must be ascribed to its proper cause, which, to the disgrace of humanity, is nothing else than the avarice of the shipmasters in purchasing more than their vessel is calculated to accommodate. One is not sorry to find that they meet with a very severe reward, since, by such injustice, they frequently frustrate their own hopes; but to reflect that this loss of property is at the expence of so many innocent lives, must affect every feeling mind with horror and indignation\*.

Without endeavouring, however, to palliate such acts of iniquity, it may perhaps appear upon in-

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\* The loss is frequently 15 per cent. in the voyage, and four and a half at the West Indian harbours.

quiry, that abolition is neither the sole nor the best resource for putting a stop to the exercise of this avaricious barbarity. Regulations have been made, and have of late been strenuously renewed, which seem to bid fair for effecting the wished for cure. The West India planters, upon whom so much odium has been undeservedly thrown, are wholly unconcerned with any errors that may arise in the management of the slave cargoes. On a late occasion, they evinced their disinterestedness; for the assembly of Jamaica, disregarding any addition that might be made to the price of slaves from the acts of parliament passed in favour of negroes, concurred in the general wish for correcting the errors of the trade, and even entered with zeal in the cause of reformation.

We have now treated of the means by which the Guinea traders are enabled to store their ships, and the regulations which have been adopted by the British parliament for the more comfortable conveyance of these slaves from the coast; it remains, therefore, to speak, in the next chapter, of their treatment, situation, and distribution among the West India planters.

## CHAPTER V.

Arrival and Sale in the West Indies—Negroes newly Purchased—How Disposed of and Employed—Detail of the Management of Negroes on a Sugar Plantation—Mode of obtaining them—Houses, Clothing, and Medical Care—Abuses—Late Regulations for their Protection and Security—Causes of their Annual Decrease—Polygamy, &c.—Slavery in its Mildest Form Unfriendly to Population—General Observations—Proposals for the further Meliorating the Condition of Slaves, with which the subject concludes.

WHEN a Guinea ship arrives in the West Indies, it is announced by public advertisement. The sales, which formerly took place on board the ship, are now (most properly) conducted on shore, and care is taken that no cruel separation of relations should take place. It is obvious, however, that notwithstanding the best intentions, such melancholy accidents should sometimes occur; but there are seldom instances of purchasers willingly dividing the members of a family.

To behold a number of human beings, naked, captive, exiled and exposed for sale, must, at first sight, affect the mind with melancholy reflections; but the victims themselves seem to be hardly conscious of their situation. The circumstance of being exposed, is to them no way disagreeable; they have not been accustomed, under their own intolerable climate, to wear any quantity of clothes, nor are they destitute of decorations, on which they set



a higher value than we are accustomed to do on the more elegant articles of apparel \*.

In the market they display few indications of being deeply affected with their fate. Apprised of the intention of their owners to sell them, they display impatience to be purchased; and when any one of their number is so unfortunate as to be rejected, on account of some personal defect, the rest express their derision by loud and repeated laughter.

The negro, when sold, is provided with the articles which are in future to constitute his dress, and sent off to the plantation where he is to reside †.

At this period, they are usually consigned in different lots as pensioners on the provision-ground of the negroes already settled, an allowance being made for their subsistence. At first sight this custom may appear a harsh imposition on the industry of the established slave, who must share his hardly-earned property with others newly imported. But, on due consideration of the case, and principally from appealing to the choice of the negro, it has been found to be rather a favour than a disadvantage. The

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\* The negroes are also fond of impressing scars upon their faces, which they imagine contribute to their better appearance. Indeed, the practice of tattowing is very common among them. Ignorant declaimers on the slave trade have falsely attributed these marks to the inhumanity of their masters.

† In 1791, the prices of negroes were as follow: An able man in his prime, 50*l*.; an able woman, 49*l*.; a young man, 47*l*.; a young woman, 46*l*.; boys and girls, from 45*l*. to 40*l*. Sterling, besides the duty. The practice of marking them is pretty much in disuse.

settled negro forms a strong attachment to the youth who is thus consigned to his patronage, and the affection is perfectly reciprocal. On the side of the young stranger it constitutes a renovation of the society of his countrymen, which must certainly please more than to be consigned to the care of a white; and, on the other hand, the old negro is delighted to spend his old age among his adopted children, whose society must also awaken his mind to a pleasing remembrance of his youthful days.

The above practice is common to West Indian estates of all kinds; but, in the following reflections, I shall confine myself chiefly to the economy of sugar plantations. On these estates, the labourers are usually separated into three gangs. The first consists of the strongest individuals, men and women, of the whole stock, whose occupation is to clear the ground, plant and cut the canes, and attend the process of sugar-making. The second set consists of the younger negroes and convalescents, whose chief employment is weeding, or any such light exercise. The third group is the children, superintended by old women, who pull green meat for the cattle, or weed in the garden.

The first gang is summoned before sun-rise to their labour, and are attended by a driver. They work two or three hours, and then are allowed half an hour for breakfast, which consists of boiled roots or vegetables, highly seasoned. At noon they are indulged with two hours of refreshment. At two o'clock they resume their tasks, from which they are

released at sun-set; and, if their labour has been hard, or the day wet, they are granted an allowance of rum. Thus their whole labour amounts to no more than ten hours a-day, Sundays and holidays excepted \*. It is true, at the crop season, they are obliged to submit to night attendance on the sugar-making; but from being divided into watches, and plentifully fed with syrup and ripe canes, they preserve their health remarkably well.

The judicious plan of exciting the industry of the negro, by assigning him a certain portion of land to cultivate, is now become exceedingly common. The slave thus is transmuted into a sort of tenant, and the surplus of his gains accrue to gratify his palate, and clothe him well. In Jamaica, where ground is plenty, the effects of this are greatly felt; and to prevent the mischief which might arise from that foolish propensity of the negroes to rear articles of food precarious from the hurricanes, every proprietor is bound to have an acre of provision-ground for every slave, exclusive of the other grants he may give.

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\* Besides holidays and Saturdays, the negroes in Jamaica are allowed one day in a fortnight for cultivating their own ground. Some of them allot this day to the manufacturing of coarse articles, which they sell at the market of Kingston. At this place they are seen to assemble on Sundays to the number of ten thousand, where they exchange their hand-work for salted beef and iron, or fine linen, or ornaments for their wives. There is never an instance of a master interfering with the property of the negro which his industry has acquired.



The negroes commonly assemble their cottages into villages, which, being interspersed with fruit trees, produce a pleasing prospect. Whatever idea an Englishman might form of their huts, they certainly are (considering climate) more comfortable lodgings than the ordinary abodes of the Scotch or Irish peasantry. The building is commonly from 15 to 20 feet in length, and is reared of hard posts interlined with wattles. The roof is of cocoa or palm leaf, and completely shelters it from the rain. The bedstead, the table, two or three stools, a jar, and some calabashes, compose the furniture, and their cookery is conducted in the open air. But however indifferent the furniture of the ordinary slave may be, the tradesman and domestic are much better provided, when their own private property has made them independent of their master's bounty. The clothing of the negro is supplied by a daily allowance of Osnaburgh linen, woollen cloths, &c. from his proprietor. Their common garb is, to be sure, far from being good; but on holidays they contrive to appear not only decent, but even gaudy.

A very principal circumstance, and which must greatly conduce to the comfort of the negro, is the regular attention paid to their health. Every plantation is attended by a skilful practitioner in the healing art; for the planters being in general men of information, do not permit such ill-qualified practitioners as abound in England.

The most loathsome diseases which are prevalent

among the negroes, are the cacaby and the yaws. The former is a dreadful distemper, supposed to be the leprosy mentioned in scripture ; the latter, which is infectious, if it attack adults, is seldom capable of cure ; but children often pass through it, on which account they are frequently inoculated for it like the small-pox.

Besides these, we ought not to omit mentioning a species of the tetanus, or lock-jaw, so fatally incurable among children ; and the stomach-evil, more common to those advanced in life. The unhappy victim of this disorder feels a continual craving for earth, which he eats greedily. It was common, at one period, among the brutal overseers, to punish this propensity with the lash.

Invalids, and women in labour, are accommodated with hospitals and nurses, and, where the proprietor is a man of generosity, with even the more expensive cordials that alleviate distress. On the whole, make allowance for a few circumstances which time will in all probability remedy, and the negro slave may be pronounced happier than one half the peasantry of Europe.

The reader who wishes to draw a parallel between the peasant of Europe and the West Indian slave, cannot find a more sensible comparison than what is given by Baron Wimpffen, in letters from St. Domingo.

Speaking of the negro, " It is certain," says that author, " that, thanks to the climate, which reduces their wants to a mere trifle ; thanks to edu-

cation, which leaves them ignorant of rights and enjoyments, of which they can form no idea; thanks to the thoughtlessness of their character, and the fickleness of their humour; and, lastly, to the interest which their owners have in their well-doing, the lot of a negro slave, all things considered, and especially when he has the happiness of belonging to a master who does not measure his humanity by his avarice, is preferable to that of the peasantry of a great part of Europe.—Let us descend to particulars.

“Without any other property than the uncertain retribution of an uncertain labour; or with a property which nothing but the most active industry can render equal to his necessities, the subsistence of the peasant, and a family, frequently numerous, depends from day to day on accident, on the state of his health, and on a number of circumstances, which it either is not in his power to foresee, or which, if foreseen, prove a new source of wretchedness. View him alternately humbled by the prosperity, always humiliating, of his equals; by the pride of his superiors; by the comparison of his poverty with their opulence; and, finally, by all the distinctions which compose the long chain of subordination, of which he is always the last link.

“He is free, it is true, at least he is taught to believe so; but what is this liberty for a man, who, in whatever direction he attempts to move, is either detained, or pushed back into the circle of wretchedness from which he hoped to escape; now



by the want of means, which only renders his poverty doubly poignant ; and now by the opinion of the world, which makes him but the more sensible of his own nullity.

“ He is certainly, if not better, at least more clad than the negro : but the negro has no need of clothes. The habit which with the one is merely an article of luxury, is with the other an object of indispensable necessity.

“ The cottage of the one is larger, and better furnished than the casa of the other ; but its reparations, and its moveables alone absorb no inconsiderable part of his earnings : it must be repaired in summer, it must be warmed in winter.

“ The one can only provide food and raiment, discharge his taxes, &c. with specie, difficult to be procured ; but of which the other has no need.

“ The European, by dint of labour, of numerous privations, and of unremitting industry, has scarcely succeeded in acquiring a moment's ease, before a melancholy presage of the future intervenes, and blasts his fugitive delights. He must think of his children, who are growing up, and of old age which is fast approaching. If he looks round he sees his own wants multiplied in each of the individuals who call upon him for shelter, food, and raiment. If he turns an eye upon himself, he beholds the enervated arms which will shortly support him no more in the combat he has still to wage with poverty—even after a struggle of three-score years !

“The negro, too, has his sufferings; I do not wish to deny it: but, exonerated of the care of providing for himself for the present, and for his family hereafter, he suffers less from the hardships necessarily attached to his condition, than from the privation of certain enjoyments.

“The unhappiness of the latter therefore is, if I may so express myself, local and negative: that of the former universal and positive. It is diffused over all his existence, and over all his connections; over the future as well as the present. The perception of what he suffers, and the remembrance of what he has suffered, incessantly admonish him of the sufferings he has yet to undergo!

“When the negro has eaten his banana he goes to sleep—and though a hurricane destroy the hopes of the planter; though fire consume the buildings erected at a vast expence; though subterraneous commotions ingulph whole cities; though the scourge of war spread devastation over our plains, or strew the ocean with the wrecks of our scattered fleets—what is all this to him! Enveloped in his blanket, and tranquilly seated on the ruins, he sees with the same eye, the smoke which exhales from his pipe, and the torrents of flame which devour the prospects of a whole generation!”

That the more cruel circumstances in the lot of the negro have continued and will continue to be gradually alleviated, appears from the interference of the legislature of late in their behalf. It likewise appears, from numerous instances, that in cases

where the cruelty of the master to his slave has been brought to light, the vengeance of the law has been justly exercised upon the offender. It will readily, however, occur to the reader, that in a country where the evidence of a negro is not taken, the law can only, in very peculiar circumstances, afford a shelter to the slave from the vindictive spirit of his master, should he unfortunately fall into the hands of such a proprietor. That all the narratives of whippings, mutilations, &c. of slaves, which have been told in Europe, are absolutely false, would be an improper assertion; but allowance must be made for exaggeration so seldom disjoined from a description; and in general terms it may be asserted, that the treatment of West Indian slaves is mild and indulgent\*.

“ A lady, whom I have seen, a young lady, and

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\* It may appear a mark of disrespect to the authority of Mr. Edwards, to subjoin in this place, a quotation which decisively proves him to have given an account of the usage of the negroes by far too favourable. But the cause of truth demands more respect than Mr. Edwards; and though it be deviating from the direct line of my subject, I should deem it unjust not to contrast Mr. Edwards's evasive confession of West Indian cruelty, with some facts drawn from the respectable authority of the writer lately quoted, Baron Wimpffen. Mr. Edwards informs us, that the treatment of the negroes is mild over all the West Indies. Let any one peruse the subjoined specimens of barbarity, and pronounce whether, in a country where such cruelty is perpetrated, where such monsters are permitted to live, the unhappy being who is subjected to the bare possibility of submitting to their capricious revenge can be said to be mildly treated?



one of the handsomest in the island, gave a grand dinner. Furious at seeing a dish of pastry brought to the table overdone, she ordered her negro cook to be seized, and *thrown into the oven, yet glowing with heat*—And this horrible Megæra, whose name I suppress out of respect to her family; this infernal fiend whom public execration ought to drive with every mark of abhorrence from society; this worthy rival of the *too famous* Chaperon \*, is followed and admired—for she is rich and beautiful!

“So much for what I have heard, and now for what I have seen.

“The day after my return, I was walking before the casa of a planter with one of his neighbours, when we overheard him bid a negro go into the enclosure of this very neighbour, pull up two young trees which he pointed out to him, and replant them immediately on a terrace he was then forming.

“The negro went: the neighbour followed him, surprised him in the fact, and brought him to his master, whom I had by this time joined, in the hope of witnessing a scene of confusion which promised to be amusing.

“Conceive, Sir, what passed in my mind, when, on the complaint of the neighbour, I heard the

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\* A planter of St. Domingo, who, in the same circumstances, seeing the heat shrivel and draw open the lips of the unhappy negro, exclaimed in a fury, “The rascal laughs.”

master coldly order another of his negroes to tie the pretended culprit to a ladder, and give him an hundred lashes! We were both of us struck with such astonishment, that, stupified, pale, and shuddering, while the unhappy negro received the barbarous chastisement in silence, we looked at one another without being able to utter a single word—And he who ordered, he who thus punished his own crime on the blind instrument of his will; at once the dastardly perpetrator and the unfeeling witness of the most atrocious injustice, is here one of the first organs of the law, the official protector of innocence! Heavens! if a pitiful respect for decorum forbids me to devote the name of this monster to eternal infamy, let me at least be permitted to hope that Divine Justice will hear the cries of the sufferer, and sooner or later accumulate on the tyrant's head all the weight of its vengeance!"

To the honour of the legislature of Jamaica, they have instituted a council of protection, expressly for the purpose of examining into the cruelties committed upon negroes; and whenever a complaint, or probable intelligence, is received of any unjust punishments, the strictest inquiry is made. Besides this humane institution, the surgeon of every plantation is required to give in an annual account of the increase and decrease of the slaves, declaring, in the case of decrease, the cause which his own unbiafed opinion leads him to ascribe.

The grand argument against the continuation of

slavery in the West Indies, undoubtedly is the waste of life which it occasions ; and that the islands, unable to supply themselves with the offspring of the slaves they already possess, are forced to depopulate Africa, by a continuation of the trade. What has been formerly brought forward upon the vast disparity between the males and females among the negroes, is in part an answer to this objection. But it should also be mentioned, that the practice of polygamy, which subsists among the blacks, operates as another very powerful cause of decreasing population. It may be, perhaps, supposed that the influence of legal prohibition, might conduce to obviate this unfortunate circumstance ; but any one who is acquainted with the habits and temper of a negro, would pronounce it impracticable to reform the evil. No hardship could be imposed upon him more severe (in his estimation) than an obligation of fidelity to one object. The natural consequence of this superiority of number in the males, is abandoned profligacy in the other sex, whose irregular habits expose them to continual abortions.

It need not be denied that slavery itself is a very powerful circumstance in producing thinness of numbers. Sentiment must combine with instinct, before the offspring of man becomes an object of due regard ; and that is a quality seldom abundant in a slave.

Numberless schemes have, at various times, been presented to the public upon the favourite subject of improving the condition of these people. The



most commendable plan that could be followed to accomplish this end, would be, in the first place, to assign to the labourer a certain and fixed task for the day; after the performance of which, all the rest of the day should remain at his own disposal, and liberal encouragement might be held out to employ the spare time to his own advantage. Their property acquired thus, should be carefully watched over by the laws; and to accustom them to right notions of justice between man and man, they ought to be made arbiters in disputes among themselves, and constituted into juries. Besides, the day of rest should be more religiously observed than their established customs have taught them to do. The Sabbath, instead of being a day of market, should be to them a cessation from all employment, and an opportunity for mental improvement. By observing these modes of improvement, and equalizing the sexes, by importing more females from Africa, the condition of the slave would gradually meliorate, and the slave trade cease to exist.

But the grand evil which demands to be removed, and which is too notorious to admit a shadow of palliation, remains to be mentioned. It is in vain to institute regulations in favour of the slave, whilst he continues exposed to the dreadful hardship of being sold off the property to which he belongs, to defray the debts of his proprietor, after he has become attached to the soil, and somewhat enriched by his industry. When the good negro has been comfortably settled upon the provision-ground, which affords

him, besides subsistence, some luxuries of life, he may be separated from his wife and family, sold by auction, and dragged to the mines of Mexico, where, excluded from the light of heaven, he suffers, unheard of and unpitied, not for his own guilt, but for the misfortunes of his master. Let this iniquitous law be therefore abolished ; let the negro be sold along with the property to which he is attached, but in no other manner. The injustice of hurrying away the unhappy victim of his master's failure and debts, to regions where slavery exists in its most frightful aspect, admits of no arguments, and no palliation. Cruelties of a different nature, though severe in themselves, happen unfrequently, and are therefore much less to be dreaded ; but, while the system remains as it is, there is no end to the continuance of this misery.

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## BOOK V.

### AGRICULTURE.

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#### CHAPTER I.

Sugar Cane—Known to the Ancients—Conjectures concerning its Introduction into Europe—Conveyed from Sicily to the Azores, &c. in the 15th Century, and from thence to the West Indies—Evidence that Columbus himself carried it from the Canary Islands to Hispaniola—Summary of Labat's Reasoning to show that it was found growing spontaneously in the West Indies—Both Accounts reconciled—Botanical Name and Description—Soils best adapted for its Cultivation, and their Varieties described—Use and Superiority of the Plough—Method of Boiling and Planting.

THE sugar cane arrests the principal regard of any one who attends to the agriculture of the West Indies. Sugar was by the ancients denominated *saccharum*, transformed by the monks into *zucharum*, and from thence at last converted into its English name. Sugar, from the testimony of Lucan, was well known to the ancients, and probably found its way from the east at a very early period. From the Holy Land, where it was well known to the Crusaders, it made its way to the Morea and islands in the Archipelago; from thence to the island of Sicily;



and from Sicily it appears to have been transplanted by the Spaniards to the Azores, Madeira, Canary, and Cape de Verde Isles. Historians dispute about the time when it was transported to the West Indies; but, from the most probable testimony, it seems to have been introduced thither by Columbus himself; for we are informed by Martyr, that upon his arrival at the West Indies, he saw no plants or trees with which he was acquainted, except the pine and the elm. Now, it is well ascertained, that the cane was well known in Europe previous to the discoveries of Columbus; and it is singular, that if it had existed in the West Indies, Columbus should not have found it.

Other historians, however, assert, that the cane is a native of America, and was found growing spontaneously in all regions of the newly discovered hemisphere. Among the authors who adopt this side of the question, is P. Labat, who, in support of his argument, informs us that Gage, an English voyager, gives an account of sugar canes being presented, among other articles, to the crew of his ship by the Charaibes of Guadaloupe. The Spaniards, continues the same author, had at that period never cultivated an inch of ground in the Smaller Antilles. Their ships, indeed, commonly touched at the islands for wood and water; and they left swine for the benefit of such of their countrymen as might occasionally land there again. But it is absurd, in the highest degree, to suppose that they would plant sugar canes, and at the same time put hogs ashore to destroy

them. Neither had the Spaniards any motive for bestowing this plant upon islands which they considered as of no kind of importance, except for the purpose we have mentioned; and to suppose that the Charibes might have cultivated, after their departure, a production of which they knew nothing, betrays total ignorance of the Indian disposition and character.

The same author continues his arguments in the following words: "We have surer testimony, and such as proves beyond the possibility of contradiction, that the sugar cane is the indigenous production of America. For, besides the evidence of Francis Ximenes, who, in a treatise on American plants, printed at Mexico, asserts, that the sugar cane grows without cultivation, and to an extraordinary size, on the banks of the river Plate. We are assured by Jean de Lary, a Protestant minister, who was chaplain, in 1556, to the Dutch garrison in the fort of Coligny, on the river Janeiro, that he himself found sugar canes in great abundance on the banks of that river, and in situations never visited by the Portuguese. Father Hennepan, and other voyagers, bear testimony, in a similar manner, to the growth of the cane near the mouth of the Mississippi, and Jean de Laet to its spontaneous production in the Island of St. Vincent. It is not, therefore, for the plant itself, but for the secret of making sugar from it, that the West Indies are indebted to the Spaniards, and these to the nations of the east."

These seemingly contradictory assertions are not however totally irreconcilable. Canes might have

grown in the West Indies, and yet have been also carried thither by Columbus; but, at any rate, the industry of the ancient Spaniards must have far exceeded the moderns; since, in the year 1535, thirty sugar mills were established.

The sugar cane is a strong yellow coloured and jointed reed, terminating in leaves, and containing a pithy juice, of a sweet the most agreeable in nature. The general distance between the knots of the cane is from one to three inches, and the reed is usually an inch in diameter. The height of the cane varies with the mould, but is in general from three to seven feet; and below, it shoots into stoles or suckers \*. The cane thrives on various soils; but it appears to agree best with that which is exceedingly rich. St. Christopher's contains the most excellent soil in this respect. The soil called brick mould in Jamaica claims the next rank. It is deep, warm, and easily wrought; and has the singular quality of requiring no trenching, even in the wettest weather. In the French part of St. Domingo, this soil greatly abounds, and gives a prodigious value to the property. In favourable seasons it has frequently returned two tons and a half of sugar for the cane plants of an acre. The black mould is of dif-

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\* On the top of the cane there often rises an arrow, which contains a white seed; but this never vegetates when sown: A sort of proof that the cane is not indigenous to the soil.

*N. B.* There are other species of cane besides this. Captain Bligh brought home one from the South Sea, which was in length far greater than that of the West Indian production.



ferent kinds, which it were needless to particularize, We ought not, however, to pass over that other species, chiefly found in the parish of Trelawny, in Jamaica, known by its peculiar aptitude for those sugars which are to be refined. It has a glossy and shining appearance; and when specimens of it are dried, they greatly resemble gamboge. Though deep, it is not heavy, and naturally dry. It is chiefly to be used for what are called ratoon canes; that is, the suckers from the roots which have been previously cut for sugar.

In the cultivation of other lands the plough has been used, which, though advantageous, is, I fear, from the nature of the lands, incapable of becoming universal. It is, however, surprising, that the practice of hough-crofs ploughing, and round ridging, harrowing the same lands, should have come to prevail among the proprietors of Jamaica. Undoubtedly a much better management is to plough in the spring, leave the land fallow in the summer, and then hoe, after the ancient method, in autumn. But the advantages of the plough are inestimable. The labour of one man, three boys, and eight oxen, with a common single-wheeled plough, by returning the ploughshare along the back of the furrow, will easily hoe 20 acres in 13 days.

When the old laborious mode of holing is practiced, the process is as follows: The land being cleared and weeded, is divided into plots of 15 or 20 acres, with intervals for roads between. Each part is subdivided into squares of three feet and a half by

a line and wooden pegs. You place the negroes in a row in the first line. The labourers are ordered to begin with the divisions of the first line, and proceed backwards, making in each hole an excavation of 15 inches in width at the bottom, and two feet and a half at the top. When the trenches are formed, the cane is placed longitudinally in the cane-hole, and covered to the depth of two inches. In 12 or 14 days the sprouts appear, so that it is necessary to supply them with new earth, till, in the course of four or five months, the banks are completely levelled. At this time it is of the greatest importance that the overseer should be punctual in frequently cleaning them, and also in removing the lateral suckers which draw so much nourishment from the plant.

The cane ought to be planted between the beginning of August and November. Canes which are planted after this time, losing the advantage of the autumnal rains, never sprout till May, when they rise both at joints and suckers. Those planted late in spring are seldom more fortunate; and the January plant introduces disorder into the period of the crops: besides, being cut in wet weather, they are apt to spring afresh, and have an unconnected juice. Indeed, no error can be more egregious than to mis-time the returns of the crop. An estate being like a complicated machine, whose parts must act always in unison with one another, before its effect can be properly produced. It must, however, be confessed, that the West Indian planter (even allowing his pru-

dence to be capable of avoiding every procedure connected with misfortune, and of adopting the wisest plans for the regulation of his estate) is liable to calamities which no foresight can obviate, and no management prevent. The chief of these calamities is called the Blast, (the Aphe of Linnæus), which consists of myriads of little animals invifible to the naked eye. Searching for their food in the juice, these minute ravagers wound the blades, and check the circulation of the fluid till the cane withers and dies. Besides these (though less generally destructive), we may mention the grub, called the Borer, and another known in Tobago by the name of the Jumper Fly. The first mentioned plague, namely the Blast, I am informed, is never found in those plantations where the *formica omnivora*, or carnivorous ant is prevalent. Whether this be authenticated, I cannot decisively pronounce; but it is certain this little ant exterminates almost every smaller insect. Spanish historians have, indeed, told us wonderful stories about the ravages of this ant, but I am inclined to believe they are perfectly exaggerated.

The method of manuring lands in the West Indies is performed by five compositions, viz. coal and vegetable ashes, feculencies from the still-house, refuse, or field trash, dung obtained from stables, and, lastly, mould from gullies and other waste places.

As to the first mode of manuring, when the land is wet, I imagine the effect of the ashes must be very salutary; but upon the generality of soil it seems



by no means useful, since it has been found undissolved in the land when opened up at the distance of five years. But the best of all manures is undoubtedly by having the cattle-pen moveable from one field to another, the urine operating very powerfully. This mode may be depended upon in all grounds, but such as are worn out with cultivation. It is a common practice, after a field of canes has been cut, to set fire to the stubble, by which means, it is imagined, that a valuable manure is obtained. Such a practice in moist grounds may possibly do neither good nor ill; but in the generality of soil fitted for sugar, nine times out of ten it must do positive harm.

But, notwithstanding all these varieties in the mode of manuring, much might yet be done. Manures of sea-sand and lime are used in Britain with advantage, and might certainly be of equal advantage here. The same remark applies to marl, of which a soft and unctuous kind abounds in Jamaica. It may be asked why the experiment has never been made? The answer is easy, In the West Indies, agents and servants have neither time nor means to apply themselves to any novelty in agriculture; practice is their only guide, and continuation in the beaten tract their only object.

It is now time to conduct the reader into scenes of a different kind, that he may contemplate the manufacture of that commodity whose culture we have now described.

## CHAPTER II.

Crop Time, the Season of Health and Festivity—Mills for grinding the Canes—Of the Cane-Juice and its component Parts—Processes for obtaining Raw or Muscavado Sugar—Melasses, and its Disposal—Process of making Clayed Sugar—Of Rum, Still-Houses and Stills—Cisterns and their Ingredients—Windward Island Process—Jamaica Method of Double Distillation—Due Quantity of Rum from a given Quantity of Sweets ascertained and stated.

As soon as the sugar-mill is set in action, the sickly looks of such of the negroes as have been hitherto indisposed, are changed into an aspect of health and vigour. The horses, the oxen, and mules, even the pigs and poultry, partake of the general feast, and fatten surprisingly upon the tops and refuse. A spectator cannot contemplate this scene of industry and plenty without emotions of sympathetic pleasure.

That sugar should operate so wonderfully upon the animal economy, as to raise it in a few weeks from sickness to vigour, may seem surprising to those who regard it as unproductive of nutrition. But the benefits of this plant have been explained by those of an opposite creed in medicine with such convincing arguments, that its utility seems now to be little disputed. He (says old Hare, a physician of some distinction) who attempts to argue against sweets in general, takes upon him a very difficult task; for nature seems to have recommended this taste to all sorts of animals. The birds of the air, the beasts of the field, many reptiles and flies, seem

to be pleased and delighted with the specific relish of all sweets, and to distaste its contrary. Now, the cane or fugar I hold for the highest standard of vegetable sweets. To the influence of fugar may be, in a great measure, ascribed the extinction of the scurvy, the plague, and many other diseases formerly epidemical.

The fugar-mill is a simple machine; it consists principally of three upright cylinders, plated with iron, from 30 to 40 inches in length, and from 20 to 25 inches in diameter. The canes are twice compressed through these rollers; for, after being passed through the first and second, they are fixed to the middle one by a frame called the Dumb Returner, and then squeezed back till they are pulverized between the other rollers again. The receiver of the juice is a leaden bed, and the refuse, called Cane-trash, is used for fuel.

Jamaica has of late been indebted to Mr Woolery for an ingenious improvement upon the construction of the fugar-mill, viz. the addition of a lantern-wheel, fixed to the middle cylinder, with wallowers or trundles. The effect of this is to produce, during the work of an hour, in place of 300 or 350 gallons, 500 gallons, supposing ten mules are employed. Deducting four hours out of 24 for loss, this yields per day 10,000 gallons, which by computation amounts to 36 hogsheads of 16 cwt. of fugar per week.

The cane-juice is composed of one part of pure water, one of fugar, one of gross oil and mucilagi-



nous gum, with a portion of essential oil. This is a medium estimation, for the proportions vary in juices of different qualities. Other substances sometimes enter the green tops when ground, and occasion fermentation in the liquor. The ligneous part of the cane is frequently found mixed with it, and the crust or black coat which surrounds it between the joints, from the blackness of its colour, is apt to have some effect in diminishing the value of the sugar.

The juice runs from the receiver to the boiling-house in a gutter of wood, lead-lined, and is received again into the copper clarifiers. Of these there are three, the size of which must entirely depend upon the celerity with which it is necessary to dispatch the manufactory of the canes. When the grinding mills supply very rapidly, there are clarifiers capable of holding 1000 gallons; but in general they do not each exceed a third part of that size. When the clarifier stands at one of the boiling-houses, the *teache*, or a boiler capable of holding from 70 to 100 gallons, is placed at the other end, and between these there stand three other boilers, which diminish in size as they reach from the boiler to the clarifier. When the clarifier has been filled with liquor from the receiver, in order to get rid of the superabundant acid, the *temper* is stirred into it, which is usually Bristol white-lime. To effect a separation of this acid, it is a common practice to allow to an hundred gallons of liquor a pint of Bristol lime. This occasions a black calx to be precipitated to the bottom of the vessel, and affects the sugar so, that little

more than one half of that quantity seems necessary, and it is also proper to boil it in water.

From the reasonings of Mr. Bouffie (to whom the assembly of Jamaica voted a reward of 1000l. for his improvements in this process), it appears that sugar manufactured upon a vegetable alkaline basis is in general as much superior in colour as that procured by lime is in grain; so that it seems highly probable (at least the question merits investigation) that vegetable sweets and lime, if combined; would prove a better temper. The fire being increased, and the scum formed on the top, the liquor is not suffered to boil, but the quantity of heat is denoted by blisters and froth. After this, the damper is applied and the fire put out. The liquor being allowed to stand, its scum thickens, and it is drawn off by a channel from the bottom, clarified, and almost transparent, to the grand copper, while the scum on the top gradually sinks unbroken till the liquor is all off. This mode is far superior to that former one of ebullition and scumming; for it is plain, that (besides the disadvantage of labour) the circulation of the fluid in boiling mixes all the gross particles, which would otherwise come to the top.

In the large copper the practice of scumming is more advantageous. When the quantity of liquor is reduced by evaporation, the boiling and scumming is continued, and lime thrown in if the clarification needs it. When reduced still more, it is laded into the third copper boiler, where the same operations continue, and at last it is brought into

the teache. Thus there must be three copper boilers and three clarifiers. Evaporation continues in the teache till it is laded, or struck as the phrase expresses it, into the cooler, being now considerably thicker than before.

The cooler is a shallow wooden vessel, which contains about an hogshhead of sugar. Here the sugar forms into a mass of semiformed crystals, after which it is carried to the curing house, where the melasses drains from it. But previous to this change, it should be observed, first, that the liquor in the cooler should cool very slowly; and, secondly, that the cooler, if excessively narrow, occasions an unfavourable smallness of grain.

To judge whether the sugar be sufficiently evaporated to undergo the above-mentioned process of striking or for passing from the teache to the cooler, requires much attention. Experienced negroes will calculate by the eye, but the most common way is to judge by the touch. The thread which follows the finger will break at different lengths in proportion to the time which the liquor has boiled. On an experiment depending so much on practice, little farther can be said. A method more scientific was recommended by a Mr. Baker of Jamaica, in an essay printed in 1775: "Provide (says he) a small thin pane of clear crown glass, which I would call a *trier*; on this let fall two or three drops on the subject out of the other, and carry your trier out of the boiling house into the air. Observe your subject, and more particularly whether it grains



freely, and whether a small edge of melasses separates at the bottom. I am well satisfied, that a little experience will enable you to judge what appearance the whole skip will put on when cold, by this specimen, which is also cold. This method is used by chemists to try evaporated solutions of all other salts; it may seem, therefore, somewhat strange that it has not been adopted in the boiling house."

To Mr. Baker, also, the West India planters are indebted for the prevalent method of clarifying the sugar by means of vessels hung to several fires, and dampers to prevent ebullition.

The curing house is a large building, provided with a cistern, the sides of which are sloped, and over which there is a frame of joist work covered with empty hogheads without headings. Each hoghead has the stalk of a plantain leaf through it, six or eight inches below the joists. The melasses drains through the spongy stalk into the cistern, leaving the sugar behind, which commonly dries in three weeks; and from this process obtains the name of Muscavado sugar, in contradistinction to that manufactured in a different manner, called Lisbon, or clayed sugar.

The process of obtaining this sugar is as follows: The sugar from the cooler is put into forms or pans, conical downwards, leaving a hole of an inch and a half for the melasses to drain through. The hole, it must be observed, is closed with a plug till the liquor comes to a consistency. Twenty-four

hours after the plug is removed, a stratum of moistened clay is spread over the top of the pan, by which means the water oozing through the fugar, carries away more of the melasses than would otherwise come. The fugar thus produced is superior to the Muscavado, and the French planters practise it generally; but the British planters declare that the loss of weight accompanying this mode more than outstrips the advantage of quality. Where 60 lbs. of fugar are made in the Muscavado manner, 40 are only procured in this process; but as the last drawn off melasses yields about 40 per cent. of fugar, the difference is reduced to about one-sixth part of the weight.

We proceed to offer some observations on the art of procuring rum. This process is far more curious than the former, as it obtains from the very dregs and feculencies of the plant one of the purest and most fragrant spirits that can be produced by distillation.

The still-houses of British planters are of various sizes; in general, however, equal in extent to the boiling and curing houses together. Some are so extensive as to contain 2000 gallons; but as there are few of that extent, we shall confine our remarks to such as would correspond to a plantation capable of yielding, in ordinary years, 200 hogsheads of fugar. For such an estate two copper stills, one of 1200, the other of 600 gallons, are necessary. The tank or tubs must, if possible, be kept in a running water, and in that case need only be of sufficient

width to admit the worm. A stone tank is preferable to a tub, if running water cannot be had, because it heats more slowly, and if capable of holding 30,000 gallons of water, may be kept cool enough to condense the spirit.

Besides these, the distiller must provide a dunder cistern of 3000 gallons, a cistern for the scummings, and 12 fermenting vats to contain 1200 gallons each.

The ingredients of this apparatus are melasses drained from sugar, scummings of the boiled liquor, or sometimes the cane juice even raw, lees or dunder, and, lastly, water. Of these ingredients, the dunder, and also the water, serve for the purpose of making the sweets combined with them yield a far greater quantity of spirit than they would otherwise afford. The proportions are, in general, scummings, lees, and water, one-third of each.

When these are well mixed and pretty cool, in 24 hours the first charge of melasses may be put in, of which six gallons for every hundred gallons of the liquor in a state of fermentation is to be given at twice, viz. three per cent. the first charge, and the other three a day or two afterwards, when the liquor is highly fermented; but the heat of this fermentation must never exceed 94 degrees in Fahrenheit's thermometer. In seven or eight days it is fit for distillation; after which it is to be conveyed to the largest still. Here it should be kept above a steady and regular fire till it boils, and then the fuel may be gradually abated. The spirit, con-



denfied by the furrounding fluid, then runs in a stream through the worm, clear and transparent.

This fpirit, called Low Wines, becomes rum by the fecond diftillation. It may not be untimely to obferve, however, that in the firft procefs, the Jamaica diftillers ufe dunder more copioufly than thofe of the other iflands. The ufe of dunder, as was before mentioned in different language, is to diffolve the faccharine fweets. Its ufe and application requires a fkilful mixture: When the fweets confift of melaffes, and not of cane liquor, the dunder fhould be liberally applied, becaufe the melaffes is a more tenacious fubftance than the other; but where the cane juice is the principal part, not above 20 per cent. of dunder is required.

In order to augment the vinofity of the wafh, many fubftances are recommended by Dr. Shaw, fuch as tartar, nitre, common falt, and the vegetable or mineral acids. The diftillers of St. Chriftopher's, indeed, are faid actually to ufe fea water as an operator of the fame tendency, and it is looked upon as a real and confiderable improvement. Dr. Shaw alfo defires the diftiller to introduce into the fermenting ciftern a few gallons of the vitrified fpirit, which, he afferts, will much augment the evaporation. Whatever advantage might refult from following thefe prefcriptions, it is pretty evident that a certain quantity of vegetable alkali will be of fingular utility; but this advice muft be taken in moderation, for if too large a quantity be infufed, the fine effential oil, the flavour of the fpirit, will

be kept back. The object of greatest moment is cleanliness in the cisterns, not only for the melioration of the rum, but because the foul vapour, which it collects while uncleaned, is frequently fatal to the first who approaches it.

It was mentioned just now that the Jamaica mode of mixture is different from the practice of the Leeward Islands. The proportions they observe are as follow :

Dunder, one-half, or	-	50	gallons
Sweets, 12 per	} Melasses,	6	
cent.		36	
Water,	- - - -	8	
<hr/>			
100 gallons			

According to the Jamaica mode, the low wines are drawn off in a butt, and conveyed to the second still of 600 gallons, to undergo a second distillation. In the course of a day there is obtained from this two puncheons of rum, in which olive oil will sink; and thus the process is finished. Seventy gallons will yet remain in the still, so that in fact 530 gallons of low wine yield 220 of proof spirits. Thus weekly are produced 12 puncheons of rum, or 110 gallons of the Jamaica standard. The proportion of the rum produced on an estate to the sugar, is about two-thirds of the former to the latter. The reader may, perhaps, have a more distinct idea of this from the following statement: The scummings sent to the still-house are seven gallons per cent. of

the cane liquor; 200 gallons of cane juice are required for every hoghead of sugar, so that where 200 hogheads are produced, there will be 28,000 gallons of juice, equal to 4666 of melasses. This, added to 12,000 gallons of melasses from the curing-house, makes up in all 16,666 gallons of sweets, which ought to produce 131 puncheons of proof rum, of 100 gallons each.

The above observations, both upon cultivation, boiling and distilling, have been principally drawn from Jamaica. In like manner, in the subsequent chapter, when treating of the farther particulars with regard to this article, such as the first cost, current expences, and returns which may be reasonably expected, our remarks and references shall be drawn from the same quarter. Allowances must, however, be made for the variation between Jamaica and the other Windward Islands.



## CHAPTER III.

Capital necessary in the Settlement or Purchase of a Sugar Plantation of a given Extent—The Lands, Buildings, and Stock separately considered—Particulars and Cost—Gross Returns from the Properties—Annual Disbursements—Nett Profits, various contingent Charges not taken into the Account—Difference not commonly attended to in the Way of estimating the Profits of an English Estate and one in the West Indies—Insurance of West India Estates in the Time of War, and other occasional Deductions—The Question, why the Cultivation of the Sugar Islands continues under so many Discouragements, considered and discussed.

IN the business of sugar planting there is no medium between immense loss and immense gain. To embark in this business with any tolerable prospect of wealth, 30,000*l.* is no more than a moderate capital. This may be easily conceived, if it be taken into view that the expences attending a small estate are more than proportionable to its extent, if taken in comparison with those attending a large one. When we speak of capital, we either mean cash or solid established credit. It must here be considered that West Indian loans are very different from those of Britain, where the mortgage is marketable; but in these islands it is not. When the money is called for, there is no one ready to appropriate the debt to himself and advance the sum; so that when credit is suddenly withdrawn, the unfortunate planter is speedily ruined by selling his property far below its value.

We begin then with appreciating the sum to be paid for, and the profits to be reasonably expected from, an estate yielding, *communibus annis*, 200 hogf-heads of sugar\*, and thirty puncheons of rum. In the *first* place, we examine the lands.

An estate yielding the above returns cannot be of less extent than 900 acres, of which there are usually allowed 300 for canes, the same number for esculent vegetables, such as yams, plantains, potatoes, &c. and a third proportion of the same extent which remains under native wood for supplying the timber necessary for the estate. The general run of estates are rather above than below this extent, not owing (as some have asserted) to the avaricious temper of West Indian proprietors, but to the quality of the ground, which is so exceedingly valuable as to oblige the planter to take in large tracts in order that the scanty produce of the one kind may be compensated by the exuberant returns of the more generous soil.

The value of land must depend very much upon its situation. In Jamaica, an estate of 600 acres, in a favourable situation, would sell, I imagine, for fourteen pounds currency per acre, *i. e.* ten pounds Sterling. The attendant expences upon clearing this would amount, in current money, to the following sums :

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\* Of sixteen hundred weight each, containing one hundred and ten gallons each.

To 600 acres of land	-	L. 8400
To clearing one half for canes, at 12l. per acre	-	3600
Clearing and planting in esculent vegetables 100 acres, at 7l. per acre		700
To clearing another 100, and sowing Guinea grafs, at the same rate	-	700
Enclofing and fencing the whole	-	700
Total Currency		L. 14100
or Sterling		10071

The buildings on such an estate may be reckoned as follows :

1. A water-mill (if it can be obtained), or (if it cannot) an allowance equal to what it would cost is to be made for either a wind-mill and a cattle-mill, or for two wind-mills	Jamaica Currency	L. 1400
2. A boiling-house, including the cost of three clarifiers and four boilers	-	1000
3. A curing-house adjoining, containing one-half of the crop, and a melasses cistern to contain 6000 gallons	-	1800
4. A distillery-house, with two stills, the one holding 1200, the other 600 gallons, a tank holding 30,000 gallons of water, twelve cisterns fixed in the earth, and a rum store	-	1600
Carry forward		5800



## WEST INDIES.

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	Jamaica Currency.		
Brought forward			L. 5800
5. The overseer's house	-	-	600
6. Two trashes covered with shingles, at 300l. each	-	-	600
7. Hospital, lying-in and prison rooms, doctor's shop, and store-house for utenfils	-	-	300
8. A stable for 60 mules	-	-	150
9. Shops for tradesmen	-	-	150
10. Sheds for wains, &c.	-	-	50
Extra expences	-	-	350
Total			L. 7000
Or Sterling money			5000

## STOCK.

The stock necessary for such an estate may be estimated as follows :

	Jamaica Currency.		
250 negroes, at 70l. each	-	-	L. 17500
80 steers, at 15l.	-	-	1200
60 mules, at 28l.	-	-	1680
Total			L. 20380

The whole amounts to—

Lands	-	-	14100
Buildings	-	-	7000
Stock	-	-	20380

Total in Jamaica Currency L. 41480

Which is within 50l. of 30,000l. Sterling.

To calculate in Sterling money, the returns of such an estate will be—

	Sterling.
200 hogsheads of sugar, at 15l. Sterling per hoghead	L. 3000
130 puncheons of rum, at 10l. Sterling per puncheon	1300
	<hr/>
Gross returns	L. 4300

It is a common mistake to imagine that all the expences of the estate are obviated by the return of rum; but the following estimate of expences will evince the falsity of such an opinion:

The annual supplies from Great Britain are of the following kind:

1. Negro clothing, such as Osnaburgh, pennistones, shirts, blankets and hats.
2. Tools for the carpenters.
3. Miscellaneous articles, such as nails, rivets, chains, hoes, bills, knives, hoops, barrels, tobacco pipes, lead, train-oil, grindstones, &c.
4. Provisions, such as salted herrings, beef, pork, butter, soap, candles, salt, flour, pease, groats.

The above articles, at a moderate estimate, cannot be less than 850l. Sterling.

To these must be added the charges of salaries to overseer, clerks, and servants, bills to tradesmen, taxes, wharfage, staves, and other occasional supplies, which, by computation, amount to 1300l. Sterling, or 1840l. Currency.

The annual charges of all kinds will therefore amount to 2150l. Sterling, exactly one half of the produce of his property. In this estimation no notice is taken of the tear and wear of buildings, or the expence of six per cent. for legal commission to his agents, should he be absent himself from the spot. It is not, therefore, wonderful that a West Indian estate should not be at all times a mine of wealth, or rather that it should not very frequently be a mill-stone about the neck of the proprietor, and drag him to destruction.

In comparing the value of West Indian with British property, it is reasonable to hold in view that the West Indian planter is both landlord and tenant of the little estate which he cultivates. Should an intemperate season occur, the English proprietor is no more affected by the difference in the produce of his estate, than in as far as he may sympathize with the unfortunate situation of his tenant. The most destructive war does not affect his estate as it does the West Indian resident in Britain, who, unless he submit to pay a high premium for security against the rage of the elements and the ravages of war, must pass many a sleepless night in dreadful suspense for the subsistence of his family, while creditors grow more importunate as danger increases.

A question here naturally starts up from the nature of the subject. How does it happen (it is demanded) that whilst the charges of a West Indian property are so large, and the profits so small, that



so many should embark in the attempt, and the sugar islands be so rapidly cultivated and improved? To such as advance this question, a more proper subject cannot be held out to view than the situation of numberless unfortunate men, who have fallen victims to the misfortunes attendant upon such a mode of seeking riches. The failure of these has given an opportunity to others of a rapacious temper to take advantage of their distress, and purchase their estates, most probably, at a very low rate. Like the Cornish peasants, who behold a shipwreck without compassion, and even decoy the pilot by false lights, they not only refuse support, but even delude the planter to ruin. The rich man of this unfeeling stamp lends the adventurer a sum of money sufficient to purchase an estate, who, in the hopes of being continued in credit, prepares to stock his property; but just as his industry has enabled him to do this, the unfeeling creditor pretends immediate necessity for his money; the law is rigorous; the lender (since others are deterred from purchasing the ground by the expences which it must yet require) gets the estate at his own price, and the unfortunate planter is ruined for life. Thus oppression in the creditor, and misfortune in the adventurer, contribute equally to advance cultivation.

To the philosopher speculating in his closet, the fluctuating nature of West Indian property would seem a sufficient object to prevent him from embarking in this species of trade; yet it may be

looked upon as in reality the cause of so much money being expended in attempting to obtain the advantage of fortunate returns.

The price of sugar is exceedingly variable, and the principal cause of the inequality of the profits which it yields, arises from the comparative goodness or badness of its manufacture. Every one who sees the method of sugar-making, regards it as a very simple process, and, by a natural propensity to imitation, wishes to engage in the business; but where so many unqualified experimenters come forward, there must be more who fail than who succeed; and their want of success is certainly owing to themselves, though they ascribe it to the capriciousness of the market. The above may be looked upon as causes much contributing to the rapid cultivation of the West Indies: that there are other (perhaps more material) causes of improvement, will not be denied; but these it were foreign to our purpose here to discuss.

The above minute remarks on the growth and manufacture of sugar may, perhaps, be thought tedious by those who do not attend to the importance of the subject; but as so many individuals are more or less connected with the trade and manufactures of the colonies, it is presumed that the interest excited by the above observations will be a sufficient apology for their introduction. We proceed, in the next chapter, to lay before the reader all the information that could be collected upon the minor articles of Indian production, such as

cotton, indigo, coffee, cacao, pimento, and ginger, which, with sugar and rum, principally contribute the bulky freight which at present employs more ships than all the towns of England amounted to at the beginning of the present century.



## CHAPTER IV.

Of the minor Staple Commodities, viz. Cotton, its Growth and various Species—Mode of Cultivation and Risks attending it—Imports of this Article into Great Britain, and the Profits accruing from the Manufactures produced by it—Indigo, its Cultivation and Manufacture—Opulence of the first Indigo Planters in Jamaica, and Reflections concerning the Decline of this Branch of Cultivation in that Island—Coffee, whether that of the West Indies is equal to the Mocha—Situation and Soil—Exorbitant Duty to which it was subject in Great Britain—Approved Method of cultivating the Plant and curing the Berry—Estimate of the annual Expences and Returns of a Coffee Plantation—Cacao, Ginger, Arnotto, Aloes and Pimento.

## COTTON.

THIS plant, one of the most valuable gifts of a bountiful Creator, is found in all the tropical regions of Asia, Africa, and America. The cotton wool manufactured into cloth is of two kinds, greenseed and shrub cotton. The latter is subdivided into two species; the one of such a nature that the wool can be separated from the seed by no way but by the hand. It is used, therefore, principally for wicks to the lamps which are used in sugar-boiling; although, if it could be separated like the other kinds, it would be a valuable acquisition to our manufactures. The second kind of the greenseed, though vastly finer than the other species of cottons generally used, is yet inferior in fineness to the former; it has a duller green and

larger seeds. Both these kinds rise into large trees, which blossom from October to January, and bear pods from February to June. The flowers are composed of five yellow leaves, beautiful but not fragrant. Each leaf has a purple spot at the bottom. The pod, when ripe, opens into three or four partitions, and discovers the cotton in as many white locks. The small and black seeds are interspersed in these locks.

The shrub cotton resembles an European Corinth bush, and is divided into several varieties. *1<sup>st</sup>*, The common Jamaica, which is coarse but strong, though the brittleness of its seeds, and the difficulty of its cleaning, make it less profitable than other kinds, yet the obstinacy of habit keeps it in use.

*2<sup>d</sup>*, The brown bearded has a somewhat finer staple and a better ratoon, but it is attended with this disadvantage, that it is more difficult to clean.

*3<sup>d</sup>*, Nankeen, different only in colour from the last, and giving a name to the cloth called after it.

*4<sup>th</sup>*, French, or small seed, generally cultivated in Hispaniola, is finer and more prolific than the Jamaica, or brown bearded, but less hardy than either.

*5<sup>th</sup>*, Kidney chain cotton, or the true cotton of Brazil. From its being exceedingly good, prolific, and easily cleaned, it is the highest imprudence in the planter to mix it with any other.

The mode of culture is the same in all these varieties; and as dryness is the most favourable cir-

cumstance in the growth of cotton, they correspond in this quality, that they will flourish in the most rocky soil, provided it has been exhausted by former cultivation. From May to September inclusive, is the season fitted for sowing cotton. Eight or ten seeds are buried in every hole, because the chance of some being devoured by the grub, and of others rotting, must be calculated. The sprouts rise in a fortnight, and great care must now be taken in clearing every impediment to their growth, leaving, however, only two or three (the strongest) in each hole, in case the grub should attack them. Three or four months after they are topped at the head to make them shoot laterally. At the end of five months the plant puts out its beautiful yellow flowers, and in two months more the pods appear. When the wool has been gathered, the seeds are separated by means of a simple instrument, called a Lin, composed of two parallel rollers, turned in opposite directions. The cotton is put through these, and the seeds being too large to pass in the interspace behind, they are thus separated. The wool is then hand-picked, that it may be cleared of all the extraneous substances which attach to it, and, after being packed into bags of about 200 pounds weight, is sent to the market.

In the cotton-wool produced in the West Indies, there is considerable difference of quality.



	Per Pound.		
The wool of Berbice was fold, in 1780, for	2s.	1d.	
Demarara, from	1s.	11d.	to 2s. 1d.
Surinam,	—	—	2s.
Cayenne,	—	—	2s.
St. Domingo,	—		1s. 10d.
Tobago,	—	—	1s. 9d.
Jamaica,	—	—	1s. 7d.

Though the prices may have since changed, yet the relative value still continues the same. It is also worthy of observation, that the difference of price in the Berbice and Jamaica cotton is from 25s. to 35s. per cent. in favour of the former: A decided proof that a proper choice of the seed is absolutely necessary.

In estimating the cost of a cotton plantation, and the returns to be expected, I fix on a small capital, because the case here is different from that of a sugar plantation, where an immense stock is necessary to the adventurer on his first outset. Here a moderate beginning is perfectly sufficient. In many parts of the West Indies, land fit for the rearing of cotton may be had for 5l. Jamaica currency per acre; but, as it is proper to change the ground at certain periods, we must allow double the quantity to be purchased which is laid under cotton. The cost is therefore,

## Jamaica Currency.

For 50 acres, at 5l. per acre, -	L. 250	0	0
Expence of clearing and planting 25			
acres, at 7l. per acre, -	175	0	0
Twelve negroes, at 70l. each,	840	0	0
A year's interest, at 6 per cent.	75	18	0
A year's maintenance, clothing, and			
medical care, - - -	120	0	0

Total,     L. 1460 18 0 or  
              L. 1040 Sterling:

It has been a common mode of calculation in Jamaica, to allow 120lb. to the acre planted in cotton; but, from the average of successive crops, I imagine that 112lb. is a more reasonable allowance. Allowing, then, the price of cotton to be 1s. 3d. Sterling per pound, and supposing no more than 100lb. to be produced on an acre, the whole produce of 25 acres will be 175l. Sterling. If we deduct incidental expences, to the amount of 25l. the remainder, in Sterling money, is 150l. an interest on the capital of 14 per cent. If the cotton be 2s. per pound, the profit is 20 per cent.

But, to counterbalance this return, cotton is, in its nature, a most precarious commodity. The grub, the blast, and the rain continually threaten its destruction. In the Bahama Islands, during the year 1788, no less than 280 tons were devoured by the worm. It cannot, however, be denied, that as the present demand for cotton is so great at home, the cultiva-

tion of this commodity bids fair to be a lucrative employment to those who shall hereafter engage in it; and the profits will be still more enhanced, if attention be paid to procure and separate the more valuable species of feeds.

I shall conclude the subject with presenting to my readers the following tables, drawn from authentic sources, which cannot fail to furnish abundant encouragement for speculation and adventure.

*An Account of Foreign Cotton-wool imported into the British West Indies, in British Ships.*

Years.			lbs.
1784	—	—	1135750
1785	—	—	1398500
1786	—	—	1346386
1787	—	—	1158000

*An Account of Foreign Cotton-wool imported into the British West Indies, under the Free Port Act.*

Years.			lbs.
1784	—	—	2169000
1785	—	—	1573280
1786	—	—	1962500
1787	—	—	1943000



*An Account of Cotton-wool, British and Foreign, imported from the British West Indies into Great Britain.*

Years.		lbs.
1784	— —	6893959
1785	— —	8204611
1786	— —	7830734
1787	— —	9396921

*An Account of Cotton-wool imported into Great Britain, from all Parts.*

Years.	lbs.	Supposed Value in Manufactures.
1784	— 11280338	— L. 3950000 Sterling.
1785	— 17992888	— 6000000
1786	— 19151867	— 6500000
1787	— 22600000	— 7500000

*Machinery established in Great Britain (1787) for the Cotton Manufactory.*

143 water-mills, which cost	—	L. 715000
20500 hand-mills, or jennies, for spinning the shute, for the twisted yarn spun by the water-mills (including buildings and auxiliary machinery),	— —	285000
Total,		L. 1000000

From the construction of the machinery, it has been asserted, that a pound of Demarara cotton has been spun into as much thread as would extend 169 miles. In Great Britain not less than 600,000 people find support from the cotton-manufactory. By the nearest computation, the number of individuals maintained upon the woollen-manufactory are not a million, so that it does not exceed the importance of the cotton in a twofold proportion.

### INDIGO.

IN the British West Indies there are three species of this plant; the first of which, though hardier and finer, is esteemed less valuable than the other two, because it is not so prolific in its returns. All the species agree in this quality, that though they thrive on niggard soils, and though the longest heat does not kill them, yet that a spell of wet weather entirely destroys them. In cultivating indigo, the land, when cleared, is divided into trenches, and the seed strewed by the hand at the bottom; a bushel of seed being quite sufficient for four or five acres. The season most proper for planting in the West Indies, seems to be the month of March. In America, the proper season varies with the season of spring, which, on that continent, is exceedingly various. The plant is a child of the sun, and certainly flourishes to advantage nowhere but in tropical countries. The insect most destructive to the prosperity of the indigo plant, is a species of the grub or worm. There is

no other remedy but to change the foil; and the want of attention to this circumstance may be ascribed as a sufficient reason for the many recent failures in this business. The usual return of indigo (if the grub be prevented), for the first cutting, is about 80lb. per acre of Pigeon's neck, or 60lb. of the Guatemala. The yielding of the subsequent cuttings is less; but if the land be new, sometimes the whole five cuttings amount to 300lb. per acre of the second quality. For rearing the produce of five acres, four negroes, who can otherwise maintain themselves, are only requisite.

For obtaining the dye, two cisterns are necessary, placed the one above the other. The first is called the Steeper, the other the Battery. Besides this, it is necessary to have a lime-vat, with the top-hole, or plug-hole, placed at least eight inches from the bottom, in order to leave sufficient room for the lime to subside entirely before the lime-water is drawn off into the battery. When the plants are wet, they are laid in strata in the steeper till it is about three parts full; they are then pressed with boards, which are wedged, or loaded, to prevent the plants from buoying up; and the plants themselves are saturated with water. They are then left to ferment; but great care is taken that they shall neither draw off the pulp too soon, nor occasion putrefaction of the tops by retaining them too long. To ascertain the due time which is necessary for the fermentation of indigo, the Chamber of Agriculture in Hispaniola have made repeated experiments, and, for the



benefit of the public, have been so kind as to publish the following receipt.

“After the indigo has been steeped in the cistern eight or nine hours, draw off a little of the water, and, with a pen dipped into it, make a few strokes upon white paper. The first will probably be high coloured, in which case the indigo is not sufficiently fermented. This operation is to be repeated every quarter of an hour, until it loses its colour, when it is arrived at the true point of fermentation.”

It is astonishing that an experiment so simple in itself, if it answers, should have been for so many years unknown to the indigo planters in general; and I confess, that, although I have had no opportunity of giving it a trial, I am myself somewhat doubtful of its efficacy. The following method, which I give on the authority of Mr. Lediard, is, I conceive, attended with much greater certainty.

“Let a small hole be made in the steeper, six or eight inches from the bottom, exclusive of the opening or aperture for drawing off the impregnated water; let this hole likewise be stopped with a plug, yet not so firmly but that a small stream may be permitted to ooze through it. After the plants have been steeped some hours, the fluid oozing out will appear beautifully green, and at the lower edge of the cistern, from whence it drops into the battery, it will turn of a copperish colour. This copperish hue, as the fermentation continues, will gradually ascend upwards to the plug; and when that circum-

stance is perceived, it is proper to stop the fermentation.

“ During the progress of this part of the business, particular attention should be paid to the smell of the liquor which weeps from the aperture; for should it discover any sourness, it will be necessary to let the fermented liquor run immediately into the battery, and lime water of sufficient strength must be added to it, until it has lost its sourness. As it is running off, it will appear green, mixed with a bright yellow, or straw colour, but in the battery it will be of a most beautiful green.”

After the tincture has been discharged into the battery, the process of churning must now be put in practice. This was at one period effected by mere manual labour; but now it is performed by means of levers, wrought by a cog-wheel, and kept in motion by a horse or mule. When the fluid appears curdled, it is impregnated with lime-water to promote separation, and prevent putrefaction; but the operator must carefully distinguish the different stages of this process, too small a degree of agitation making the indigo green and coarse, and too much making it almost black. After the pulp has granulated, and the flakes settled at the bottom, the superincumbent water is taken away, and the dye, when dried in moulds, is fit for the market.

From the prolific nature, and cheap apparatus attending the manufacture of the plant, as also from the small number of negroes requisite for its culture, it is, at first sight, a matter of astonishment, that an

article which should yield in the proportion 1200 pound to the twenty acres, should have proved an unsuccessful subject of employment in the hands of many who have tried it. Yet certain it is, that the planters who, after embarking in the cultivation of indigo, have failed with exceeding loss, were in general men of sound mercantile sagacity, and of property and industry. The most satisfactory reason that can be assigned for their misfortunes, is the dreadful mortality among the negroes (arising from the vapour of the fermented liquor), which inevitably attends an indigo manufactory. This has, combined with lesser evils, blasted the hopes of acquiring wealth by this pursuit, and has diverted their industry to a different channel.

#### COFFEE.

THE public has been already favoured with so many essays on the beneficial properties of this berry, that it is almost impossible to bring forward any thing additional to recommend its advantages. Among the many able performances on the subject, none has attracted more general approbation than a work of the ingenious Dr. Benjamin Moseley, which, since 1785, has gone through five editions in English, and has been translated into most of the languages of Europe.

It has been long admitted, that the West Indian coffee is inferior to the coffee of Mocha; but it has been also erroneously supposed that this inferiority



arises from the West Indian being the produce of a coarser species of tree. In refutation of this supposition, and to prove that the whole difference depends upon the soil, climate, and mode of curing, it need only be mentioned, that coffee transplanted from the West Indies to an English hot-house has, under proper management, proved considerably superior to any that ever came from the East.

The small berry, which, both in Arabia and the West Indies, grows in dry sloping ground, is found most agreeable to the English; but the beans produced upon a rich deep soil, which are of a dingy green, and continue some years unfit for use, proves the favourite of American customers. It might be expected, therefore, that, while the taxes imposed by the British government on coffee were severe, and while, of consequence, America was found a more profitable market, the latter would be more generally cultivated. Since the 1783, however, the British duties have been less enormous, and a wonderful change in the direction of the coffee-trade has taken place. The British demand has increased so rapidly, that the planters have changed the nature of their commodity to the taste of their customers. It is true, indeed, that the soil before mentioned as best fitted to produce the small berry, cannot always be found; but it is of importance to speculate beforehand in the choice of soil in a country where such variety of ground is to be procured.

The whole of the West Indies, but more especially Jamaica, abounds with red hills of that warm

gravelly mould so remarkably favourable to the growth of coffee bearing high flavoured fruit. Upon good land the plants may be safely exposed all the year round, provided proper care be administered that they shall not be blasted in the blossoms by the north wind, so frequently fatal to this production. The mode of planting is to set the young plants eight feet distant from each other, in all directions, in holes made large enough to hold the lower part of the stem and all its roots. Although eight feet be the usual distance between the plants, yet, as it is often found, in rich soils, that the trees grow so luxuriant as to impede the growth of each other, it is then advantageous to cut down every second row within 10 or 12 inches of the ground; and it frequently happens, that old plantations cut in this manner will yield a tolerable crop the second year.

The average produce of a coffee plantation must depend upon the nature of the soil. On dry ground a pound and a half of prepared coffee is accounted good bearing for a single tree; but in rich spongy soils the produce (though inferior in flavour) is frequently six. Upon the whole, the following may be looked upon as an average calculation. When the trees are raised from old ones, the first year's return may be estimated at 300; the next at 500; the third at 600 or 700 lbs. per acre. Trees raised from young plants yield nothing till the third year; and, at the end of that period, 750 pounds may be reasonably looked for.

*Of gathering the Crop.*

ACCORDING to La Roque, the practice of gathering and curing the crop is considered thus :

“ When the planters perceive that the fruit is come to maturity, they spread cloths under the trees, which they shake from time to time, and the ripe fruit drops off. The berries thus collected are afterwards spread upon mats, and exposed to the sun with the pulp on the berries, until they are perfectly dry, which requires a considerable time ; after which, the beans are extricated from their outward encumbrance by the pressure of a large and heavy stone roller, when they are again dried in the sun ; for the planters consider, that, unless coffee be thoroughly dry, there is danger of its heating. It is then winnowed with a large fan, and packed for sale.”

The above process is undoubtedly better calculated to preserve the flavour of the berry ; but I believe the aforementioned method practised in the West Indies, by being infinitely less tedious, must enable the merchant to furnish the market with cheaper coffee than the Arabian manufacturer could procure. The negro who is appointed picker goes about with a bag hanging from his neck, kept open by means of a hoop in its mouth. If industrious, he may easily pick three bushels per day, and 100 bushels of coffee in the pulp will yield 1000 pounds of the prepared commodity, fit for the market.



Coffee is cured either with or without the pulp. When cured with the pulp on the berry, it is spread to the sun on a sloping terras or platform of boards, and is usually dry in the space of three weeks; after which the husks are separated from the seeds by a grinding machine. When the pulp is removed, as soon as the coffee comes from the tree they make use of a pulping mill (a machine composed of a fluted roller, a breast board fitted to the grooves of the roller, and a sloping trough to feed them), which, when wrought by only one negro, will pulp a bushel in a minute. The bean, still in its parchment skin, is then washed in wire sieves and exposed to dry.

It has been long disputed which of these methods of practice is most advantageous. The former, I believe, gives a higher flavour; but from either method good coffee may be obtained by the assistance of age, which is its most effective improver. The membrane or skin, which still adheres to the bean, is separated by means of a machine of the following construction: A perpendicular axis is surrounded by a circular trough, and about a foot from the level of its surface there are tenanted in the axis four horizontal arms, to which are fitted as many rollers. These, on being turned round, bruise the coffee, so as to separate the skin from the bean, and when the separation is effected, the skins are carried off by a fan. In this manner 1500 lbs. will be cleared in a day. The method of clearing by stoves has been found so prejudicial to the taste

and smell of the coffee, as to be now almost entirely laid aside. Indeed there is no substance so liable to imbibe the exhalations of any thing with which it is in proximity. "Coffee berries (says Dr. Moseley) are remarkably disposed to imbibe exhalations from other bodies, and thereby acquire an adventitious and disagreeable flavour. Rum, placed near to coffee, will, in a short time, so impregnate the berries, as to injure the taste in a high degree; and it is related by Mr. Miller, that a few bags of pepper on board a ship from India, some years since, spoiled a whole cargo of coffee."

We cannot conclude this subject more properly than by drawing out an estimate of the expences attending the culture of this commodity; and the returns which may be reasonably expected from its crops. I conceive that it is the most advantageous and equally productive plant of any that the West Indies affords; for giving all due regard to the argument which is so generally advanced against the probability of its being a lucrative article of cultivation (*viz.* that the duty falls upon the consumer, and not upon the merchant), yet it is evident, that if the duty should ever become so enormous as to diminish the consumpt of the article, the planter has less temptation to cultivate that commodity than others in more general demand. For five years that the excessive duty on coffee continued, not 7,000,000 of pounds were imported into Britain, while St. Domingo has every year supplied Europe with 70,000,000; and although the demand of

Great Britain has increased since the last diminution of the duties, yet sixpence per lb. may still be reckoned too much to allow coffee to be a general beverage.

*Estimate of the Expence and Return of a Coffee Plantation in the Mountains of Jamaica, 14 miles from the Sea, calculated in the Currency of that Island, being 40 per cent. worse than Sterling, viz.*

First cost of 300 acres of mountain land, of which one-half is reserved for provisions and pasturage, at 3l. per acre,	L.	900
Ditto of 100 negroes, at 70l. per head,		7000
Ditto of 20 mules, at 28l.		560
Buildings and utenfils, mills, and negro tools,	- - - - -	2000
Expence of maintaining the negroes the first year, before provisions can be raised (exclusive of other annual expences charged below), 5l. each,	-	500
		<hr/> 10960
Compound interest for three years, before any return can be expected, at 6 per cent.	- - - - -	2093
		<hr/>
Carry over		L. 13053



## WEST INDIES.

247

Brought over	L. 13053
ANNUAL EXPENCES, viz.	
White overseer and maintenance,	L. 200
One other white servant,	70
Medical attendance on the negroes,	25
Negro-supplies, viz. clothing, tools, salted fish, and other provisions, exclusive of the produce of their own grounds,	200
Colonial taxes,	100
	<hr/>
	595
	3
	<hr/>
Total for three years, before any return can be expected,	1785
Compound interest, as it arises in the several years,	221
	<hr/>
	2006
	<hr/>
Total expence,	L. 15059
	<hr/>

*Returns of the fourth year, at 4l. per cwt. being the average price of Coffee for five years previous to 1792, viz.*

From 150 acres of young coffee may be expected the fourth year 45,000 lbs.	L. 1800
	<hr/>
Carried over	L. 1800

	Brought over	L. 1800
Deduct annual charges for the		
fourth year, - -	L. 595	
Sacks and saddles, - -	40	
	<hr/>	635
	Clear profit, -	L. 1165
(being equal to 7l. 14s. per cent. on the capital.)		

*Returns the fifth and subsequent years, viz.,*

150 acres, yielding 750 lbs. per acre,		
112,500 lbs. at 4l. - -		L. 4500
Deduct annual charges, as before, L. 595		
Sacks and saddles, - -	80	
Repairs of mills, &c. - -	100	
	<hr/>	775
Clear profit (being equal to $24\frac{3}{5}$ per cent.		
on the capital), - - -		L. 3725

### CACAO.

The Cacao, or Chocolate Nut, is a native of South America, and is still an article of considerable commerce with the Spaniards. In its cultivation, a level and sheltered spot is chosen, in which the planter digs a number of holes a foot in length and width, and about six or eight inches deep. His next process is to take the banana or some other

large leaf, and to place it within the circumference of each hole, leaving, however, the sides of the leaf some inches above the ground, after which he rubs in the mould very lightly till the hole is filled. He then selects three nuts for each hole, folds the leaf over them, after having lightly covered them with mould, and places a small stone on the top to prevent their opening. At the end of eight or ten days the leaves are opened, and the plant is then sheltered with palm leaves stuck in the ground; and also the *Erythrina* or bean tree, for the young cacao will only flourish in the shade. If the three nuts spring up, one of them is cut down as soon as the plants are 18 or 20 inches high. It seldom happens that the other two take root.

The tree is in full perfection at its eighth year, and frequently bears for 20; but many plantations of cacao have perished without any visible cause. The superstitious have always regarded comets as harbingers of its destruction. But in spite of this fatality, the British West Indies at one period abounded in plantations of this commodity, and its cultivation would still continue extensive and profitable were it not for the heavy hand of ministerial exaction. At present, the only cacao plantations of any account, in our colonies, are in Grenada and Dominica; the quantity exported from which islands, I believe, amounts, on an average, to something more than 400,000 pounds weight, valued in the London market at 10 or 11,000 pounds Sterling.



## GINGER.

Ginger was conveyed from the East to the West Indies by one Francisco de Mendoza; and as far back as the year 1547, it was exported to Old Spain from thence to the amount of 22,053 cwt. Ginger is of two sorts, the black and the white; the former is procured by preservation in boiling water, the latter by insolation, and is considerably more valuable. Both species of the article are procured with no more attention to cultivation than potatoes in Great Britain, that is, merely planting and digging, unless where they are intended for sweetmeats, in which case they are dug while its fibres are tender and full of juice. The average quantity imported into Britain from her own islands is stated at 10,000 bags of one cwt. each, which sells at London at the rate of 40s. the cwt.

## ARNOTTO.

This indigenous plant is called, by Bolanets, Bixa. It rises to the height of seven or eight feet, and produces long hairy pods, somewhat resembling those of a chestnut. In these pods the seeds are found, which have an unpleasant smell, and resemble red lead mixed with oil in appearance. Indeed, it was used by the native Indians as paint in decorating their bodies, at the time these islands were first discovered. The method of extracting

the pulp is by boiling the seeds till fully extricated, and then taking them away. The water is then drawn off, and the sediment dried in shallow vessels. Thus prepared, it is used in the composition of Spanish drugs, and many wonderful effects are ascribed to its medicinal qualities. The Dutch heighten the colour of their butter by infusing it, and it is said to be used in smaller quantities even in English dairies. Arnotto is, however, upon the whole, a commodity little in demand, and of no great commercial consequence.

#### ALOES.

The most valuable species of this commodity is that called Socotra, but the only species known to our colonies is the Hepatic. It is propagated by the plantation of suckers, and will thrive in those dry and barren soils where less hardy vegetables would speedily perish. When the plant is pulled by the root, it is carefully cleansed and put into nets or baskets, which are boiled in large caldrons, and always renewed till the liquor grows strong and black. The process of boiling is repeated in another vessel till it becomes of the consistency of honey; after which it is poured into gourds, and then dried and sent to market.

#### PIMENTO, OR ALL-SPICE.

This elegant production grows spontaneously,

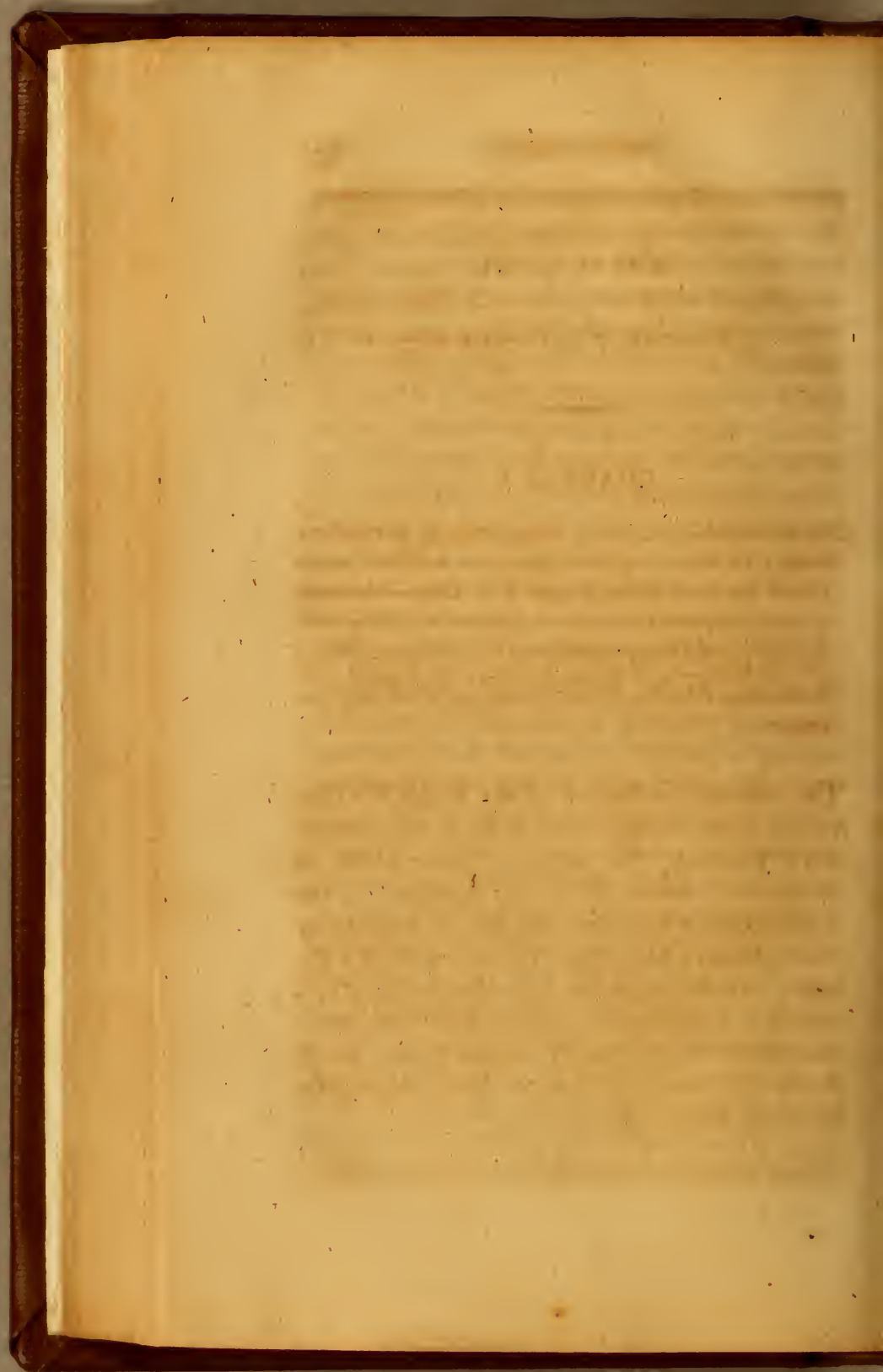
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but in more abundance in hilly situations near the sea, forming extensive groves of the most delicious fragrance. It is purely the child of nature, and mocks every attempt to improve its qualities. A pimento walk is procured by no other labour than appropriating a piece of woodland in the neighbourhood of a plantation already existing, or in a country where the scattered trees are found in a native state, the woods of which being fallen, the trees are suffered to remain on the ground till they become rotten and perish. In the course of twelve months after the first season, abundance of young pimento trees will be found growing vigorously in all parts of the land.

There is not in the vegetable world a more beautiful production than a young pimento. The trunk is smooth and glossy, free from bark, and 15 or 20 feet high; its leaves are of a deep green, like those of a bay tree, and form a beautiful contrast to its white exuberant flowers. The leaves are equally odoriferous with the fruit. As to its preparation for sale, the berries are always gathered green, for the admission of ripened fruit would considerably diminish the value of the commodity. They are gathered by the hand, spread on a terrace, and exposed to the sun till they become of a reddish brown; and when dry are sent to market. A single tree has been known to yield one cwt. of dried spice, or 150 lbs. of the raw fruit; but as good crops are only contingent, the value of the commodity is not so alluring as others, so that many



plantations of pimento are now exchanged for sugar. Jamaica is the only one of our colonies which produces it, and there are annually exported about 6000 bags of 112 pound each. It is sold in common years at 10d. per lb. the duty attached to it being 3d.



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## BOOK VI.

### *GOVERNMENT AND COMMERCE.*

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#### CHAPTER I.

Colonial Establishments—Of the Captain-General, or Chief Governor; his Powers and Privileges—Some Reflections on the General Choice of Persons for this High Office—Lieutenant-General, Lieutenant-Governor, and President—Of the Council; their Office and Functions—Origin of their Claim to a Share in the Legislature—Its Necessity, Propriety, and Legality considered—Some Correction in the Constitution of this Body proposed.

THE internal constitution of the British West Indies conforms, in almost all respects, to the constitution of England. The balance of power which, in the mother country, divides the legislature of the mother country into three branches, is imitated by these colonies, whose different orders consist of a governor, whose prerogative resembles the King's; a council or upper house; and a body of representatives chosen by the people, similar to the British House of Commons, but more fairly and equally elected by their constituents.



## GOVERNOR.

EVERY chief governor in the West India Islands, as commander in chief of the forces in his jurisdiction, has the appointment of all officers not upon the staff; and, in a civil capacity, nominates and supercedes the judges of the different courts of common law, the custodes of the parishes, the justices of the peace, and others employed in similar departments. The advice of this council, which he is bound to ask, cannot be looked upon as any considerable check upon the exertion of this prerogative; for he has the continual resource of expelling all opposers, on frivolous pretences, and filling their places *instante* with more complying members. In the general assembly, which is summoned, dissolved, prorogued, and adjourned at his pleasure, he has a negative voice; and in this also his council offer him their advice. He has the power of appointing *pro tempore* persons of his own choosing, to occupy such places as have not been filled up by the King; and the power of such successors continues till the one chosen at home arrive to supersede them. In cases of an extraordinary nature, the governor has even been known to supersede, for a time, officers of high and lucrative appointments, who had been nominated by other powers, and of filling their places by others, till the King's pleasure should be known. Like the King of Britain, he pardons the condemned culprit of every description, unless those guilty of murder

and high treason; and even in these cases he can reprieve, till word be sent to Britain, and his Majesty's injunctions sent back.

In general, every governor in the West Indies exercises the extensive powers of the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain; being keeper of the great seal, and presiding in the high court of chancery. As ordinary, he appoints to all church benefices, gives licenses for marriages, and is sole judge of the consistorial and ecclesiastical law. He presides in the court of error, and determines upon all appeals of the kind liable to be brought before this court from other courts of common law. As vice-admiral of the West Indies, he has the right of jettison, &c. and grants commission to privateers, through the medium of the court of vice-admiralty. This court, it may not be improper to observe, is invested with a power concurrent with that of the court of records. When an act of parliament relating to the trade and revenues of the British colonies in America is infringed, the judge of this court (to the great injury of the colonists) decides, from his own authority, without the intervention of a jury; and is nominated to his office by a gift of the Crown.

Besides the profits of several employments, the governor of every colony has a liberal salary attached to his office of government; but, in order that he may have no temptation in view to court the favour of the leading men of the assembly, he is not allowed to accept of any salary, unless it be fixed

(in such a manner as cannot be recalled) within the space of one year after his arrival in the West Indies.

Considering the fallibility of human nature, the distance of the governor's seat of jurisdiction from the mother country, and, above all, his extensive prerogative, it is not wonderful that he should at times be intoxicated by the influence of his power. That such extensive authority, more unlimited even than the power of the King of Britain, should not be conferred without much caution, must be evident to every one; but it is a truth, to be regretted, that in the nomination of this important office, attention is not invariably paid to the merit of the individual; and that, from the influence of party spirit, men distinguished for no other qualities than vice and ignorance, are sent out to recruit, by the emoluments of a government, the fortunes which have been ruined by their former profligate dissipation at home. From persons so destitute of character and ability, what evils may not be expected? Indeed, supposing the governor sent out by the British ministry to possess a sound understanding, and an uncorrupted mind, unless acquainted with the laws of those whom he is to govern, he must be betrayed into many inconsistencies; and the improper actions they thus commit, prove fertile sources of future damage, by standing as precedents of injustice. A glaring instance of this was afforded, while North America was a British colony, by a governor of one of the northern provinces, who ordered a criminal to be



hung some days before the time ordained by his sentence. "He meant well (says Stokes, who relates the anecdote), but being a military man, conceived that, as he possessed the power to reprieve after sentence, he had power to execute also when he pleased." And the criminal was actually hanged some days sooner than his sentence enjoined, as the governor ordered. Nor could his excellency be persuaded that, by this very act, he was committing felony. Another military governor, the same author informs us, suspended a gentleman from the council, because he had married his daughter without his consent. Besides these specimens of unwarrantable stretches of power, many instances of misconduct could be produced, still more glaring in their enormity, and more baneful in their effects to the public; but the task of numbering faults, is no way pleasant, and shall be therefore declined.

The most flagrant impropriety in the nomination of a West Indian governor, is the selection of such men as cannot be expected, from their past situations in life, to be acquainted with the laws of their country. That some knowledge of law is requisite in a governor, is evident from the nature of his office; yet the military profession, of all the most unlikely to furnish men minutely acquainted with that science, is the general source from whence the West Indies are supplied with rulers. It would be improper, however, not to state, that some governors, whose situation in the world precluded them from being acute lawyers, have filled their governments

with honour. For instance, Sir William Trelawney, Sir Basil Keith, and Thomas Earl of Effingham, were men of uprightness, as well as judgment, and were justly revered by the people. The gratitude of Jamaica, in particular, was so strong to the memory of the last named governor, that they voted a magnificent monument to be erected to his name; and evinced their veneration of his merit, by the words with which it was inscribed. But partial instances of this nature cannot apologize for the general impropriety of selecting for governors to the colonies, men equally destitute of worth, of integrity, and the knowledge requisite for their station.

#### LIEUTENANT-GENERAL, LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, AND PRESIDENT.

WHEN a government comprehends several islands, a lieutenant-general is usually appointed to be the next in succession, who is commonly lieutenant-governor of one of the islands included in the jurisdiction of the captain-general. Each of these islands, during the absence of the chief governor, is managed by a lieutenant-governor, or more frequently by the president of the council; the lieutenant-governor's appointment being, in fact, a sinecure of 1200*l.* a year. A lieutenant-governor, of dormant commission, is seldom appointed in Jamaica while the commander in chief is present; for, when that officer resigns, or obtains leave of absence, a lieutenant-

governor is dispatched from home, who enjoys the full power and profits of the office. About the year 1767, when the Marquis of Lansdown, then Earl of Shelburne, was secretary of state, some gentlemen of Jamaica solicited the minister to have a deputy-governor, who should be stationary on the island. Lord Shelburne, to obviate the expence of the office, took away from the profits of the governor the command of a fortification, called Fort Charles; and bargained with Lord Trelawney, that he should resign Fort Charles to Sir William Dalling. The result of this stipulation was, however, unfavourable. Lord George Germaine, Lord Shelburne's successor in the ministry, regarding 1000*l.* per annum as no despicable object, did not choose to continue the salary of the command of Fort Charles, as a fund for supporting the deputy-governor, assigned it over to one of his dependents, who resides at home, and enjoys the profits of the office, while the fort is commanded by his deputy's deputy.

#### THE COUNCIL.

THE members of this board, who are appointed by the King, and inserted in the governor's instructions, amount, in their full complement, either to ten or twelve, in proportion to the size of the island. When their number is reduced below seven, the commander in chief is enjoined to supply new members to that amount, but to no greater. These members, by courtesy styled Honourable, take precedence



next the governor, and the eldest supplies his place when he is absent or dead. They stand in the same respect to the governor as the privy council to his Majesty; but I conceive that he can act even in contradiction to their opinion. They are nominated justices in every commission of the peace, and sit with the governor as judges in the courts of error and appeal from the court of records. Lastly, Independent of the governor, they form an upper branch of the legislature, claiming the privilege of parliament, ordering attendance, entering protests, and keeping up all the offices and insignia of a British House of Parliament. This double office of legislators and privy council may seem inconsistent. Governor Lyttleton says, "The admitting such a distinction may be supposed to free them from all obligation of the oath they take as counsellors; because their duty to the people, as legislators, may seem to oblige them very frequently to support opinions repugnant to a governor's." But this objection is unjust; for the oath they take as counsellors, certainly does not bind them to act indiscriminately, according to the direction of the governor. As counsellors, as legislators, their duty is equally binding, to serve the true interests of the people.

Territorial qualification is not indispensably requisite to the admittance of counsellors as of members of the assembly. Persons are therefore, I am afraid, too frequently admitted, who can have little real concern in the welfare of the community, and who are consequently more obsequious to the mea-

tures of the governor than to the dictates of public utility. But it frequently happens, that even these men, unconnected with the interests of the country, are less overawed by the influence of the governor than the members who have property in the islands. In fact, the instability of this board, and the power of suspension lodged in the hands of the governor, makes it at all times dependent; and until that evil be remedied, the people have more to fear from its compliance to the governor, than the governor from its attachment to the people. It is given as the decided opinion of many intelligent people, that this board of council have actually no right to sit as legislators, that their real and appropriate office is to sit as assessors to the governor, and that they are warranted by no pretension to the branch of power they now possess. In support of this assertion, it has been urged, in the first place, that a colonial council bears no similitude to the peers of Great Britain, and consequently ought not to supply their place in the government of the West Indies. The privileges enjoyed by the English House of Lords are sacred and independent; and though the sovereign can add to their number, he cannot diminish it by any lawful exertion of his power; but the councils of the West Indies, as has been mentioned before, can be changed as well as prorogued by the arbitrary will of the viceroy, and are therefore endowed with privileges by no means comparable to the British Lords. It has been farther urged, that even the prerogative of the Crown does

not warrant imposing the authority of such a body of men upon the colonists. The King, say the abettors of this assertion, has the right of putting a *veto* upon the proceedings of the other branches of the legislature; but being, at the same time, from the nature of his office, not a separate legislator himself, he cannot justly assume the character of such, far less can he impose an authority upon any part of his dominions which it requires the united assent of all the parts of the constitution to make sacred. To those who object to their authority from arguments of this nature, it may be replied, that if, on several occasions, it should be found that the existence of such a power should be indispensably requisite to the welfare of the community where they are appointed, it is not absolutely necessary to suppose that their origin has been constitutionally legal; for the view of public advantage ought to supersede law. But in asserting the utility of this branch of West Indian government, I do not mean to imply that it was originally intended that there should be a separate body of this kind, intermediate between the assembly and the governor. Its origin seems to have been founded in the want of nobility in the West Indies, and the necessity of having some legislative house, not intermediate between the governor and the assembly, but between the assembly and the Crown. In order to corroborate the influence of the King, the governor was admitted into this convention, and was farther instructed to transmit, from time to time, the names



of such of the principal inhabitants as might appear best, qualified to supply vacancies in the council; and accordingly it is very rare that any person is appointed who has not been previously recommended by the governor.

The government still subsisting in Barbadoes is a sufficient proof that the original object of instituting the council was this; for there, in enacting laws, the governor and council form but one constituent branch in the constitution, sitting and deliberating together. In fact, throughout all the royal governments in the West Indies, this practice was originally followed; nor was it discontinued till the governor's aversion to become odious to the assembly by passing unpopular bills, induced him to decline attending in the council, and to allow the task of enacting disagreeable laws to be performed by the board of council alone. The council themselves, we may suppose, were not unwilling to deliberate separately; the Crown found it conducive to its own purposes; nor did the representatives of the people resist this mode of deliberating, not regarding it in the light of an innovation. If they had thought such, they had it in their power to protest against the change; but it does not appear that any colony opposed the right of the council to negative bills without the concurrence of the governor. By the same right which they exercise of rejecting bills, independent of the opinion of the governor, they are evidently entitled to amend particular clauses in all bills but those for raising mo-

ney; because, if the house of representatives dislike their amendments, they can effect their purpose in an indirect manner, by rejecting the bill after its first stage. The authority of the council seems to extend thus far and no farther. That such an authority, exercised freely and independently (laying aside at present all objections against the influence possessed by the governor over the council), is of essential advantage to the constitution, seems evident, if we reflect upon the disagreeable discord which must otherwise take place were not the interests of the people and the Crown balanced by an intermediate body. Whatever may be said of its illegal origin, it seems to claim the sanction of prescription, and to be at present in the eye of law a legally constituted body. It may not be improper to remark, before concluding this apology for the separation of the council, that the colonies have actually been benefited by it, since it confirms them in the much wished for privilege of having their laws immediately sanctioned by the governor, who, unable to do so while conjoined with the board of council, was obliged to transmit them to Britain to wait the tedious confirmation of their authority by his Majesty.

What has been said, does not plead, in the most distant manner, in defence of that undue influence which the governor actually enjoys over the deliberations of this body. The remedy of this evil demands very serious consideration, and the more so, because the rights of the council are so unsteadily

fixed, that in some instances they have been degraded beyond the dignity they ought unquestionably to claim, and in others they have assumed such powers as are utterly inconsistent with the liberty of the people. The assembly are the fittest body for effecting this change, and they seem competent to bring it about by a proper exertion of their strength. It should be their object, on the one hand, that the right of suspension, now vested in the governor, be at least considerably abridged, in order to give energy and independence to the council; an advantage never to be enjoyed while its members can be suspended upon the most frivolous pretences. On the other hand, caution is requisite even in communicating this restoration of vigour. To make them incapable of removal would be a dangerous expedient, if we may judge from the unwarrantable authority which some colonies in the West Indies have arrogated to themselves, even in spite of the general dependence of councils upon the governors. At different times they have fined of their own authority, have arbitrarily imprisoned for contempt, and have even claimed a right of originating money bills at their own board, amending money bills passed by the assembly, and appropriating the public revenue. A council disposed to such arbitrary measures should be resisted, instead of being corroborated by the people. To permit the increase of such illegitimate power, would be to found an impregnable and tyrannical system of aristocracy.



## CHAPTER II.

House of Assembly—Prerogative denied to be in the Crown of establishing in the Colonies Constitutions less free than that of Great Britain—Most of the British West Indian Islands settled by Emigrants from the Mother Country—Royal Proclamations and Charters are only Confirmations of Ancient Rights—Barbadoes and some other Islands originally made Counties Palatine—Their Local Legislatures how constituted, and the Extent of their Jurisdiction pointed out—Their Allegiance to, and Dependence on, the Crown of Great Britain, how secured—Constitutional Extent of Parliamentary Influence over them.

THE object of this dissertation on the colonial assemblies, is to display the principles on which Britain confirmed to her subjects in the West Indies the right of enacting their own laws; after which, it remains to be explained by what means the allegiance and subordination of these colonies are secured to the mother country. The subject has undergone discussion from many writers, and on that account no novelty can be expected; but to be plain and perspicuous is at present entirely our wish, and the rights of which we treat happily depend upon no metaphysical arguments.

It has been lately asserted, that the Crown of Britain had a just title to invest the West Indian councils with legislative authority, because the measure is founded in justice, and is of great utility to the public interest; but it is not, however, to be deduced from this maxim, that the Crown of Britain, by the same right, is warranted to impose upon her colonies

any form that his Majesty may think proper, or that such a form is to be established as does not conduce to the freedom of the colonial inhabitants. It is true, though justice and utility be the principal pillars of the liberty of the colonies, yet even were the dictates of propriety set aside, the charters, proclamations, and grants, have given to the British colonists in America a legal and constitutional right to the privileges of Britons. But, indeed, it is ceding by far too much to suppose, for one moment, that were there no charters and proclamations in existence to ratify the rights of West Indians, that their rights, as British subjects, are therefore to be called in question. The law of England certainly does grant to all the provinces of the British dominions the full privileges of the mother country, whether these provinces were obtained by conquest, or colonized by emigrants from home. Of the British possessions in America, some were obtained by force, and others occupied upon being found destitute of inhabitants; but even the injustice of forcing the original natives from their possessions does not impart a right to Europeans of subjugating these unjust invaders, after the mother country has participated in the profits, as well as the guilt of the invasion. To use the words of Mr. Long, " Shall it be affirmed, that if English forces conquer, or English adventurers possess themselves of distant lands, and thereby extend the empire, and add to the trade and opulence of England, the Englishmen so possessing and planting such territory ought, in consideration of the great services

thereby effected to the nation, to be treated worse than aliens, to forfeit all the rights of English subjects, and to be left to the mercy of an absolute and arbitrary form of government..”

In addition to Mr. Long's statement of the argument, may be quoted the opinion of Locke on the right of a conqueror over the conquered. “The conqueror gets no power (says Mr. Locke), by his conquest, over those who are conquered with him. They that fought on his side must at least be as much freemen as before. And most commonly they serve upon terms, and on condition to serve with their leader, and enjoy a part of the spoil and other advantages that attend the conquering sword; or at least have a part of the subdued country bestowed upon them. And the conquering people are not, I hope, to be slaves by conquest, and wear their laurels only to show that they are sacrifices to their leader's triumph. We are told by some that the English monarchy is founded on the Norman conquest, and that our princes have thereby a title to absolute dominion; which, if it were true (as by history appears otherwise), and that William had a right to make war on this island, yet his dominion by conquest could reach no farther than to the Saxons and Britons that were then inhabitants of this country. The Normans that came with him and helped to conquer, and all descended from them, are freemen, and no subjects by conquest, let that give what dominion it will.”

The opinion of Locke has been quoted at full



length, because it furnishes an unanswerable argument against those who, founding all the right to freedom which individuals enjoy upon the basis of forms and constitutions, throw out of their consideration all the duties which we owe to our fellow-men, in contributing to their happiness from motives of natural justice. From attending to this remark, it will therefore appear evident, that the royal proclamations and charters issued from British princes to their subjects in the West Indies were not meant to declare that their liberty was now given them, and should henceforth commence, but to acknowledge that their liberties had formerly existed and should still remain undisturbed. The return required for protecting them in the possession of these rights, bestowed by nature and not by man, was allegiance to lawful authority. Of these rights, one of the most material was this, that the laws by which they were governed should be enacted with their own consent, and that the framers of the law should be equally bound with those who were governed by it. Thus, in America and the West India Islands were established colonial assemblies, whose members, delegated by the people, and living in these countries, were too intimately allied to the interests of the state not to support them with all their power. It might appear at first sight a reasonable enough allowance to the colonies, that they should be governed by their own laws only, in this respect, that they should delegate representatives to the British parliament, and thus be fairly represented. In fact,

Barbadoes and the Charaibbean Islands, as well as some provinces of North America, were actually modelled at one period into this form of representation. But the absurdity of attempting to rule states so far from the mother country upon the system of delegation, was soon discovered, and the propriety of colonial assemblies confirmed by experience. The colonists have, therefore, an indubitable right to representation of some kind; and since it has been found that to represent them by delegates sent to Britain is impossible, the propriety of colonial assemblies incontrovertibly follows.

The assembly, thus constituted by justice, assimilates in its formation, and the extent of its jurisdiction, to the parliament of Great Britain. The suffrages being taken, the elected member is summoned by royal authority. The assembly when convened are addressed by his Majesty's representative, and proceed to hear grievances, and correct those abuses which are liable to their discussion. They commit for contempts, impose taxes and laws, and exerting along with the governor the highest acts of legislation, on some occasions consign the victims of law to execution, even before the royal assent has been received \*.

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\* The following proceedings of the legislature of Jamaica will convey to the reader, who gives himself the trouble of perusing this note, a distant idea of the power claimed by the colonial assemblies:

The only restriction laid upon the deliberative powers of the assemblies of the colonies, is, that, in

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“ To his Honour ROGER HOPE ELLETON, Esquire, his Majesty's Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief in and over this his Majesty's Island of Jamaica, &c. &c.

“ May it please your Honour,

“ We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the assembly of Jamaica, thoroughly convinced of your Honour's readiness to hear, and inclination to redress, as much as in you lies, every grievance that may affect any of his Majesty's subjects, beg leave to represent to you one which calls aloud for immediate relief, it being in itself of the most dangerous and alarming nature, and having already given birth to such confusions and distractions in this unhappy country, as have not at any time before been known in it.

“ Our ancestors, Sir, who settled this British colony, were Englishmen, and brought with them a right to the laws of England as their inheritance, which they did not, nor could forfeit by settling here. Ever since civil government was first established among us, which was very soon after the Restoration of King Charles the Second, we have enjoyed in this colony a constitution and form of government as nearly resembling that of our mother country as it was perhaps possible to make it; our lives, our liberties, and our properties, secured to us by the same laws, have ever been determined and adjudged by similar jurisdictions, and such monies as have been necessary for the support of his Majesty's government here, have, as in England, ever been raised upon the people, with their own consent, given by their representatives in assembly; our courts of justice, where life, liberty, and property are adjudged, are governed by the same laws, and stand in the same degrees of subordination to one another, as the courts which they respectively stand for, do in England; our house of assembly, as representing the whole body of our people, does, and ever did, hold the same rank in the system of our constitution, as the House of Commons does in that of our mother country; here,

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their trade-laws, they must act not repugnantly to those of the mother country ; and it is expected, in return,

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as in England, our representatives in assembly are the grand inquest of our community; they have the power, and it is their duty to inquire into the corruptions of office, the abuses of government, and the ill-administration of justice, and for that purpose it is that this body has here, as in our mother country, ever enjoyed a superiority over all the courts of justice, and a power of examining their conduct ; and all judges, magistrates, and public officers, have ever been amenable to the assembly, and their conduct liable to its inspection; and here, as in England, we owe it to the wholesome and frequent exertions of such a power in the representative body of the people, that we are at this day a free people : without it we can have no security or defence against the corruption of judges, and the abuses which may happen in every department of administration.

“ It is against a most flagrant, unprovoked, and unprecedented attack and violation, which Mr. Lyttleton, our late chancellor, made upon this indubitable right of the people, that we now resort to your Honour for redress.

“ In December 1764, Pierce Cooke and Lachlan M<sup>c</sup>Niel, two men who had been committed by the assembly for breach of privilege, and were in custody of Edward Bolt, the messenger of the house, by virtue of the speaker's warrant, did, in contempt of the power and jurisdiction of the house, apply in the first instance to Mr. Lyttleton, as chancellor, for writs of habeas corpus upon the statute of the thirty-first of Charles the Second, and upon the return of the said writs, he did, in a court of chancery which he called for that purpose, release the prisoners, and declare as follows: ‘ That it did not appear to him, from the words of any act of parliament, or of any act of the governor, council, and assembly of this island, or of his Majesty's commission or instructions to his Excellency as governor of this island, or by any other means whatsoever, that the commitment of the said Pierce Cooke into the custody of the said Edward Bolt is legal; and his Excellency the chancellor was

that the legislature of Britain will not interpose in affairs belonging to the colonies, in order that these

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therefore pleased to order, adjudge, and decree, and it is hereby ordered, adjudged, and decreed, That the said Pierce Cooke be, by the authority of this court, released and discharged from the custody of the said Edward Bolt; and did also make the same declaration and order as to the said Lachlan M'Neil, which orders and declarations of his, he did most irregularly call decrees, and order them to be enrolled among the records of the court of chancery.

“ It is evident from the opinions of the ablest lawyers in England, ever since the passing of that statute, from the opinions and declarations of judges, the uniform determinations of all the courts in England, and the constant declarations and practice of the House of Commons, that the said statute was not, nor could be, intended to extend to commitments by either house of parliament, and that the House of Commons is the only proper judge of its own privileges and commitments. This determination of Mr. Lyttelton's tends, therefore, manifestly to degrade the representatives of the people, in the system of our constitution, from that rank and authority which is held by the like body in our mother country, and if suffered to remain, would subvert the fundamentals of that system, by giving the court of chancery a power to controul the proceedings of the assembly, and by reducing them to a dangerous and unconstitutional dependence upon governors, would leave the people without that protection against arbitrary power, which nothing but a free and independent assembly can give them.

“ Every court of justice, from the meanest quarter session up to the two houses of parliament, has a power of committing for contempt, and this power requires no act of parliament to confer it, it being incident to the institution of every court of justice, and necessary for its existence, for it would be impossible to support any authority without it.

“ The courts of justice here standing in the same degrees of subordination to one another as they respectively do in England,

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may not be distracted by subjection to two legislatures so remote in situation.

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commitments by the inferior may be, and frequently are, examined and determined by the superior courts; and as commitments by the House of Commons cannot be, nor ever were, discharged by any of the inferior courts, so this extraordinary act of Mr. Lyttelton stands in our country without a precedent, such a thing having never before his time been attempted.

“ The power of commitment by the House of Commons is their’s by the common law, as well as their privileges, of which they are the only competent judges, for they judge of these matters by the law and usage of parliament, which is part of the common law.

“ As all the inferior courts here enjoy and exercise the same powers with those they stand for in England, it is surely reasonable and just that the representatives of the people here, called by the same authority, and constituted for the same ends, should also enjoy the same powers with those of Great Britain.

“ We beg leave to represent further to your Honour, that by the thirty-first clause of an act of the governor, council, and assembly of this island, entitled, ‘ An act for granting a revenue to his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, for the support of the government of this island, and for reviving and perpetuating the acts and laws thereof,’ which has received the royal approbation, it is declared, ‘ That all such laws and statutes of England as have been at any time esteemed, introduced, used, accepted or received as laws in this island, shall and are hereby declared to be and continue laws of this his Majesty’s island of Jamaica for ever ;’ and that the assemblies of Jamaica, as appears by their minutes, considering it their duty to assimilate their proceedings to those of the House of Commons, have constantly governed themselves in cases of commitment, and in the exercise of their jurisdiction, by the law and usage of parliament, which being undoubtedly part of the law of England, the use and benefit thereof was confirmed to them by virtue of the above act beyond a possibility of doubt.



Notwithstanding all the rights which I have asserted belong, independent of all other authority, to the

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“ This arbitrary measure of Mr. Lyttleton, so totally unprecedented either in England or here, so repugnant to reason, to justice, and law, and so evidently subversive of our rights, liberties, and properties, will therefore, we doubt not, be considered by your Honour as it deserves to be ; and as it marks that gentleman’s administration with the most odious colours, so, we trust, that the destruction of it will distinguish and adorn your’s.

“ It is in full confidence of your Honour’s justice and love of liberty, that we this day, in the name and behalf of ourselves, and of all the good people in this colony, lay before your Honour the ill consequences and injustice of the aforesaid determination, and beseech you, as the only means of quieting the disturbance and apprehensions they have raised in the minds of his Majesty’s most loyal and faithful subjects, to give orders that the same be vacated, and the enrolment thereof cancelled from the records of the court of chancery, in such a way, that no traces may remain of so wicked and dangerous a precedent.”

The preceding application from the house of assembly having been submitted by the lieutenant-governor to the council for their advice, the board addressed him as follows :

“ May it please your Honour,

“ We, his Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the council of Jamaica, have, agreeably to your Honour’s message, laying before us the address of the house of assembly to your Honour, taken into our serious consideration the subject-matter thereof : we have also examined and considered the proceedings now in the office of the register of the court of chancery, and the determination of his Excellency the late chancellor, touching the release of Pierce Cooke and Lachlan M<sup>c</sup>Niel, from a commitment of the assembly. Although we have the most favourable opinion of the late chancellor’s intention in that decision, yet finding that no chancellor or judge

inhabitants of the colonies, yet still their allegiance and subordination are perfectly secured to Britain,

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in this island, ever before took upon himself to make any determination upon a warrant or commitment of either branch of the legislature, it is with concern we observe, that such proceeding of the late chancellor in so new, in so delicate a case, by discharging the said Pierce Cooke and Lachlan M'Niel from the commitment of the house of assembly, was unprecedented and irregular.

"It is also with sorrow of heart we have seen and felt this his Majesty's colony, ever since that determination, labouring under a variety of distresses, flowing chiefly from the apprehensions of his Majesty's subjects, that the establishing a precedent of this nature in the court of chancery, might lay a foundation for chancellors and judges of inferior courts to interfere in, and to take upon them to determine on the privileges of the legislative bodies of this island.

"Permit us therefore to recommend it to your Honour, as the only expedient which we conceive will be effectual to quiet the minds of the people, to unite the several branches of the legislature, and to restore peace and tranquillity to this country, that you will be pleased to cause the said determination made by the late chancellor, whereby the said Pierce Cooke and Lachlan M'Niel were discharged from their commitment, and all their proceedings thereon, to be brought before you, and in the presence of the council and assembly, that you will be pleased to cause the register of the said court of chancery to enter a vacatur on the said determination, or otherwise reverse it in the most effectual manner, so that the same may not be made use of as a precedent in future."

On receiving this address, the lieutenant-governor came into council, and having commanded the attendance of the assembly in the council-chamber, was pleased to make the following speech :

"Gentlemen of the Council, Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of  
"the Assembly,

"In consequence of the addresses I have received from each of

by the extensive influence which the Crown possesses over them. Thus, as to the supremacy of the Crown, among various other prerogatives, the King preserves to himself not only the nomination of the

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your bodies, I now meet you here, and as the determination upon record in the office of the register of the court of chancery, appears to have been irregular and unprecedented, whereby the minds of the people have been greatly disquieted, and many distresses and evils have arisen to this country; and having nothing so much at heart, as the supporting the honour and dignity of the Crown, and promoting the peace and happiness of the people, I have, agreeably to your requests, taken, as chancellor, such order therein, that the said proceedings, and the entry upon record thereof, are vacated, annulled, and made void, to all intents and purposes whatsoever; and for your further satisfaction herein, I have ordered the register to attend forthwith in the council-chamber with the said proceedings, and the book of records in which the same are entered, and that he do, in presence of the three branches of the legislature of this island, enter a vacatur in the margin of the said several proceedings, and the entries of the same in the said book of records, and that he do in your presence draw cross lines over the said proceedings and the entries thereof, in the usual form and manner.

“ This measure, adopted upon your united recommendation, cannot, I am persuaded, fail of producing every happy consequence, by restoring and firmly establishing that harmony and unanimity so earnestly wished for, and so essentially necessary to his Majesty's service, and the welfare of this community.”

The register of the court of chancery attending, being called in, and having produced the records, and read the several proceedings in the said address mentioned, he did then, by the command, and in the presence of his Honour, and in the presence of the council and assembly, enter a vacatur in the margin of the said several proceedings, and draw cross lines over the said proceedings and the entries thereof, and cancelled the several papers relating thereto.



several governors, the members of the council, and most of the public officers of all descriptions, but he possesses the right of putting his *veto* to a law, even after it has received the sanction of his representative, the governor of the colony where the law is proposed. Nor is the regal influence less felt over the executive, than the legislative power within the colonies. The governor is usually chancellor by his office; but an appeal lies to his Majesty from every decree that he makes. The reason assigned in law for allowing such appeals is this, that, without such a check, the practice of law in the colonies might insensibly deviate from those of the mother country, to the diminution of her superiority.

Again, the King, as head of the empire, has the sole prerogative of making peace and war, treaties, leagues and alliances with foreign states, and the colonies are bound to stand to all consequences dependent upon such transactions, although the power which his Majesty possesses of quartering the troops, of augmenting their number, and retaining them against the will of the assemblies, must be taken with a grain of allowance.

The power of making peace and war, which is vested in the King of England, is amply checked by the interposition of parliament; and it is therefore just, that a power of similar controul should be enjoyed by the legislative bodies in the colonies. It has been, indeed, used as an argument against the inutility of checks of every kind, that military force can never be legally employed to unjust purposes,

or to violate the rights of the subject. The indisputable power, however, which always attaches to the possession of military force, is a sufficient answer to such reasoning. Nor is it a perfect security to the liberties of the West Indians to see their rights will be protected by their fellow subjects at home; the liberty of every one should be upheld by his own protection, not be dependent on the sympathy of another, although there is nothing more evident, than that the freedom of Britain is in the utmost danger, when the rights of the colonies are violated and overthrown; or, as it has been elegantly said, "When the liberties of Britain shall be devoted, she will feel subjection, like the coldness of death, creeping upon her from her extremities."

From reports made by the Lords of the Committee of Council on the subject of the slave trade, it appears that the value of the exports from Britain to the West Indies, in the year 1787 (and since that time they certainly have not diminished), amounted to 1,638,703l. 13s. 10d. the whole of which, except about 200,000l. consisted of British goods and manufactures. To this estimate we must likewise add the cost of manufactures, of provisions from Ireland, and wines from the Azores and Madeira, these being purchased with British capitals, and conveyed to the West Indies circuitously in British ports. The lumber and fish of America, transported in British vessels, ought to be included in the statement.

The official accounts of the exports from Ireland for the years 1790, 1791, and 1792, make the ave-

rage value of these years amount to 277,218l. Sterling. We may bring the whole into one point by stating it thus:

Exports from Great Britain

direct,	-	L. 1638703	13	10
— from Ireland,		277218	0	0
		<hr/>		
		L. 1915921	13	10

Add 20 *per cent.* for freight,

&c. &c.	-	383184	6	2	L.
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Exports to Africa for the purchase of ne-

groes,	-	-	-	668255
— from Madeira and the Azores,				30000
— United States of America,				720000
— British America,				100506
				<hr/>
Total,				L. 3817867

The imports from the West Indies into Great Britain, will appear from the following Table:



	Cwt.	Cwt.	L. s. d.	L. s. d.
Sugar, Montserrat, Nevis, and St. Kitt's,		242542 at 47s.	569973 14 0	
Antigua,	181813			
Grenada,	193783			
St. Vincent's, Tortola, and Anguilla,	164976	375596 at 46s.	863870 16 0	
Jamaica,	1124017			
Barbadoes,	110955	1288993 at 44s.	2835784 12 0	
Dominica,	47610	158565 at 45s.	356771 5 0	
		2865696		4626400 7 0
Rum, Jamaica,	Gallons,			
Other Islands,	2917797	at 2s. 2d.	316094 13 6	
	728645	at 2s.	72864 10 0	
Coffee,	Cwt.			388959 3 6
	32283	at 96s.		154958 8 0
Cotton,	lbs.			677738 19 0
	11618382	at 14d.		
Ginger, Jamaica,	Cwt.			
Barbadoes,	3892	at 30s.	5838 0 0	
	5755	at 44s.	12161 0 0	18499 0 0
Miscellaneous articles, valued at the customhouse prices,			466322 15 5	
Add one-third, the usual difference between the prices in the Inspector-General's books, and the current prices at market,			155440 18 5	
		Total,	621763 13 10	
			6488319 11 4	

No account has hitherto been given of the direct imports from these islands into Ireland and America, for the year 1788. Upon the authority of the Inspector General, I therefore give the following :

To Ireland,	-	-	L. 127585	4	5
American States,	-	-	106460	8	0
British American Colonies,	-	-	100506	17	10
Foreign West Indies,	-	-	18245	12	6
Africa,	-	-	868	15	0
Total,			L. 443666	17	9

Considered as a British capital, the value of the West Indies has been estimated by the Privy Council at seventy millions of pounds, by the following mode of computation :

450,000 negroes, at 50l. per head,	-	-	L. 22500000	0	0
Lands, buildings, utensils, and crop on the ground,	-	-	45000000	0	0
Value of houses in towns, trading vessels, and crews,	-	-	25000000	0	0
Total,			L. 70000000	0	0

We cannot conclude upon this subject, without stating, briefly, the shipping and seamen to which the sugar colonies directly give employment.

In 1787, it appears that there cleared, from Great Britain and Ireland, to the West Indies, 689 \* vessels.

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\* Including 14 from Honduras.

fels, containing in all 148,176 tons, and navigated by 13,000 seamen; which, as before mentioned, is equal to the whole commercial tonnage of England a century ago. The value of these seamen is certainly superior to that of the Newfoundland sailors, of whom so many remain during the winter in the country, and cannot be added to the naval force upon a sudden emergency.



## CHAPTER III.

Trade between the British West Indies and North America previous to the War—American Supplies—Ships and Seamen—Advantages of the Trade to Great Britain—Measures of Government at the Restoration of Peace—Destruction of Negroes in consequence of Scarcity.

AFTER America had got her independence fairly sanctioned by the peace of Versailles, the new parliament, by a most unprecedented mode of conduct, gave up to his Majesty the sole decision of that very important question which was at that time under consideration; namely, Whether liberty should be granted to the States of America to import lumber and provisions into the West Indies? A committee of council was therefore selected, who, though in all probability influenced by the best motives, suffered themselves to be led aside by the suggestions of self-interested men, the determined enemies of the new republic.

These advisers, blind to the dictates of humanity, wished for nothing so ardently as the ruin of America; and, though to forbid the intercourse between the States and the West Indies was evidently accompanied with most dreadful calamity to the latter, yet, in order that no scheme might be left untried to wound the rising commonwealth, they strongly advised the committee to debar an intercourse so favourable to our recent enemies.

The West Indians, scarce recovered from the ca-

lamities inflicted by the past war, and still more distressed by the effects of those tremendous hurricanes of 1780 and 1781, attempted to excite the attention of their fellow subjects, by representing the hardships of their situation. They appealed to the knowledge of all men acquainted with America, if those remaining States which were still subject to Britain were in any way adequate to the task of supplying them with lumber and provisions. They stated, that Nova Scotia had never been able to supply her own inhabitants with the necessary grain, and could not consequently be expected to be a market for them, and that all the lumber it had ever exported did not amount to what deserved the name of merchandise. The Island of St John (they represented) was still more barren; and, although Canada might occasionally afford supplies of wheat, yet it was proved, that in 1779, 1780, 1781, and 1782, the scarcity of wheat in Canada had been so great, that all exportation had been forbidden by law; and, even at that time, foreigners were supplying her market. The hardships attending this prohibition cannot be better understood, than by giving an extract from the representation of the committee of the assembly of Jamaica, on the subject of those losses of negroes which they felt in a principal degree from this cause.

“ We shall now (say the committee) point out the principal causes to which this mortality of our slaves is justly chargeable. It is but too well known to the house, that in the several years 1780, 1781,

1784, 1785, and 1786, it pleased Divine Providence to visit this island with repeated hurricanes, which spread desolation throughout most parts of the island; but the parishes which suffered more remarkably than the rest, were those of Westmoreland, Hanover, St. James, Trelawny, Portland, and St. Thomas in the East. By these destructive visitations, the plantain walks which furnish the chief article of support to the negroes, were generally rooted up, and the intense droughts which followed, destroyed those different species of ground provisions which the hurricanes had not reached. The storms of 1780 and 1781 happening during the time of war, no foreign supplies, except a trifling assistance from prize-vessels, could be obtained on any terms, and a famine ensued in the leeward parts of the island, which destroyed many thousand negroes. After the storm of the 30th of July 1784, the lieutenant-governor, by the advice of his council, published a proclamation, dated the 7th of August, permitting the free importation of provisions and lumber in foreign bottoms, for four months from that period. As this was much too short a time to give sufficient notice, and obtain all the supplies that were necessary, the small quantities of flour, rice, and other provisions, which were imported in consequence of the proclamation, soon rose to so exorbitant a price as to induce the assembly, on the 9th of November following, to present an address to the lieutenant-governor, requesting him to prolong the term until the latter end of March 1785; observing, that it was



impossible for the natural productions of the country to come to such maturity as to be wholesome food, before that time. The term of four months not being expired when this address was presented, the lieutenant-governor declined to comply therewith; but on the 1st of December following, the house represented, that a prolongation of the term was then absolutely necessary: They observe that, persuaded of the reluctance with which his Honour would be brought to deviate from regulations which he felt himself bound to observe, it would give them much concern to address him on the same occasion a second time, were they not convinced that it was in a case of such extreme necessity as to justify such a deviation. Accordingly, the lieutenant-governor, by the advice of his Majesty's council, directed, that the time formerly limited should be extended to the 31st of January then next ensuing (1785): but, at the same time, he informed the house, that he was not at liberty to deviate any longer from the regulations which had been established in Great Britain.

“ From the 31st of January 1785, therefore, the ports continued shut, and the sufferings of the poor negroes, in consequence thereof, for some months afterwards, were extreme: Providentially the seasons became more favourable about May, and considerable quantities of corn and ground provisions were gathered in the month of August, when the fourth storm happened, and the lieutenant-governor immediately shut the ports against the exportation of any of our provisions to the French and Spanish islands,

which were supposed to have suffered more than ourselves; but not thinking himself at liberty to permit the importation of provisions in American vessels, the productions of the country were soon exhausted, and the usual attendants of scanty and unwholesome diet, dropfies and epidemic dysenteries, were again dreadfully prevalent in the spring and summer of 1786, and proved fatal to great numbers of the negroes in all parts of the country,

“ On the 20th of October in that year, happened the fifth dreadful hurricane, which again laid waste the leeward parishes, and completed the tragedy. We decline to enlarge on the consequences which followed, lest we may appear to exaggerate; but having endeavoured to compute, with as much accuracy as the subject will admit, the number of our slaves, whose destruction may be fairly attributed to these repeated calamities, and the unfortunate measure of interdicting foreign supplies, and for this purpose compared the imports and returns of negroes for the last seven years with those of seven years preceding, we hesitate not, after every allowance for adventitious causes, to fix the whole loss at fifteen thousand: This number we firmly believe to have perished of famine, or of diseases contracted by scanty and unwholesome diet, between the latter end of 1780, and the beginning of 1787.”

But it was found, upon a fair trial, that the idea of the British provinces supplying America with stores was absurd and chimerical. The Gulph of St. Lawrence continued, as usual, blocked up for seven months in the year by the ice, and Nova Scotia was

still far from being fertile. It was therefore found absolutely necessary to permit the importation of lumber and provisions into the latter place from the United States. The consequences of this permission were speedily felt; for, in the year 1790, there were actually shipped to Nova Scotia from the United States, no less than 540,000 slaves and heading, 924,980 feet of boards, 285,000 shingles, and 16,000 hoops, 40,000 barrels of bread and meal, and 80,000 bushels of grain; an irrefragable proof that Canada had no surplus of either lumber or grain beyond her own consumption. What were the exports from Canada and Nova Scotia, since the war, I regret being unable to ascertain, as the committee of council for the slave trade are totally silent on that head. The exports for the year 1787, from the British sugar islands to all our remaining American possessions, including Newfoundland, consisted of 9891 cwt. of sugar, 874,580 gallons of rum, 81 cwt. of cacao, 4 cwt. of ginger, 26,380 gallons of melasses, 200 lb. of pimento, 573 cwt. of coffee, 1750 lbs of cotton-wool, and some small articles, such as fruit, &c. of little account. The value of the whole, according to the current prices in London, was 100,506l. 17s. 10d. Sterling. The shipping, to which it gave employment, was navigated by 1397 seamen. To the United States were exported, the same year, 19,921 cwt. of sugar, 1,620,205 gallons of rum, 124 1-half cwt. of cacao, 339 cwt. of ginger, 4200 gallons of melasses, 6450 lb. pimento, 3246 lb. of coffee, 3000 lb. of cotton-wool, 291 hides, and 737 barrels of fruit;



the value of which, in Sterling money, according to the current prices of London, is 196,460l. 8s.

That this abatement of the unjust restrictions laid upon the commerce between them, has been of service in relieving for a while those calamities with which the islands have been sometimes visited, is true, but the cure is not fully performed by such partial attenuation of the evil. While the intercourse with America is thus limited, and while every one of the islands continues occasionally subject to hurricanes, and many of them to successive droughts, which destroy the fruits of the earth, and leave the wretched labourer to depend solely upon the provisions which may be imported, the most deplorable miseries may at some future period be yet expected. Should the same visitations happen again, as the planters have no vessels of their own to employ, and those of America are denied admittance to their ports, how are even the most opulent among them able to avert from their labourers the repetition of this memorable famine, which swept off such numbers in Jamaica?

From these considerations, it should certainly occur to the minds of all such as are disposed to condemn the planter for acts of inhumanity to his slaves, that, to contemplate, with indifference, this unjust and cruel system of policy, is to sanction the more dreadful calamities than the most severe master will ever suffer to be imposed upon his slave. To this iniquitous system many thousands of the unhappy Africans have already been sacrificed; and, in all probability, many thousands more will yet perish.

## CHAPTER IV.

Objections against the Advantages arising to Britain from her West Indian Colonies considered.—Whether the Duties on West Indian Commodities imported fall on the Consumer, and in what Cases.—Drawbacks and Bounties, explanation of the Terms, and their Origin and Property traced and demonstrated.—Of the Monopoly Compact, its Nature and Origin.—Restrictions on the Colonists, and Benefits thence resulting to Britain.—Advantages which would accrue to the Planter, the Revenue, and the Public, from permitting the Inhabitants of the West Indies to refine their raw Sugar for British Consumption.—Project of establishing Sugar Plantations in the West Indies under the Protection of Government considered.—Remonstrances which might be offered against this and other Measures.—Conclusion.

IN order to reconcile the nation to these imprudent measures by which America was separated from the British, it was for a long time considered as an excellent object of discussion to lessen the value of the colonies in the public estimation. It was in particular held out as a political maxim, too evident to suffer contradiction, that Britain, by adhering to the system of supporting her West India possessions, incurred a number of certain and inevitable disadvantages, in return for which she reaped no solid recompense. To the utility of the West Indies, the following are the three objections which are held out to the public view. By these objectors it is stated, in the *first* place, That the duties which are levied on the products of the British West Indies imported into Great Britain, though paid in the first instance by the proprietor

or importer, ultimately fall on the consumer, and on him alone. It is asserted, in the *second* place, That the practice of allowing drawbacks on their re-exports, is dangerous and destructive to the true interests of commerce. *Thirdly*, That the monopoly of supply vested in the planters, is partial, unjust and oppressive.

I shall consider these several positions in the order in which I have placed them. The investigation of them is necessary to the completion of the work, and with a few general observations, we shall conclude.

The planters have affirmed, and they repeat, that there is not an axiom in mathematics more indisputably established, than that the value of all commodities at market depends entirely on their plenty or scarcity, in proportion to their demand or consumption. If the quantity at market be not equal to the demand, the seller undoubtedly can, and always does, fix his own price on his goods; but if, on the contrary, the quantity exposed for sale is superabundant beyond what there are purchasers to take up, the value of the commodity will fall in spite of all that the vender can do to support it. If the demand, therefore, be great, and the quantity small, the seller will not only reimburse himself for his original charges and duties, but will also be enabled to reap a considerable return of profit. Reverse the case, and he is as considerably a loser. He depends upon his ability to feed the market, or to make the supply no more than adequate to the demand. Thus, in



the common articles of use, such as leather, soap, candles, malt, beer, and spirits, the price may be said to fall on consumers when a tax is imposed, the market being always fed in the above mentioned proportion; because, if the vender of these articles should find the market overstocked, he will betake himself to another method of living. The same remark, as to the effect of the imposition of taxes, applies to the growth and manufacture of those nations over whose commerce we have no controul. The merchant regulates his imports by the quantity which he is likely to vend, and ceases to import where he misses his profit. But it must be taken into consideration, that the situation of the British West India merchant is precisely opposite to this; for (with a few exceptions) he can resort to no market except to the mother country. The price is therefore solely regulated by the quantity which is brought to sale, and the consumer is not at all concerned what duties have been imposed on the commodity, or what expences it has cost the vender; the proportion of the quantity to be sold to the consumer is all the source of dearth or cheapness. By what means, then, can the merchant make the consumer pay for the difference of duties, since he can institute no difference of price but what arises from the scarcity or plenty of the article he sells? The prices may indeed be altered by the practices of speculation; but neither the planter abroad, nor the factor at home, is culpable for what they are not concerned with.

But even admitting that the consumer were to pay the duty, or that the vender had it on more occasions in his power to raise the price as he desired; yet it must be remembered, that as the products of the West Indies are rather articles of luxury than of necessity, numbers of people will abandon their consumption, when frugality requires it. When the Muscavado sugar, in consequence of many captures in the last war, rose to an enormous price, the diminution of its consumption, in many parts of the kingdom, was in a much greater proportion.

The instance of indigo has already been given to evince the effect of duties in diminishing, I should rather say abolishing, its cultivation in the British colonies. The growth of cacao, which was at one period the pride of Jamaica, and her greatest export, has been now checked beyond the power of recovery; and though the instance of coffee plainly discovers what has been gained by the prudent reduction of existing duties, yet in calculating the effects of duties, it should be remembered that ginger, which succeeded cacao in being the staple commodity of Jamaica, met with the same fate as its predecessor, and its cultivation is now gone almost entirely into disuse. From what has been said, it follows, that in nine cases out of ten the duty falls upon the planter, not the consumer; and that in that tenth case, where the consumer is brought in for his share, the tax is just; for every

one should support taxation in direct proportion of his ability to pay.

We come, in the *second* place, to the consideration of drawbacks and bounties.

The term *drawback*, in the language of the customhouse, is applied to the tax repaid upon the exportation of raw sugar; and the word *bounty*, to the exportation of what is refined and exported in loaf unbroken. The word drawback sufficiently expresses its meaning; for the original duty paid at importation is refunded at exportation, without diminution or addition. This is at present 15 shillings the hundred weight. As to the bounty, the case was once different. To encourage the refining trade in Great Britain, government gave an actual premium on the export of refined sugar in loaves in addition to the drawback, and the collective sums so refunded and paid, amounting together to 20 shillings the hundred weight, obtained the name of bounty. This repayment of duties has been unjustly considered as a matter of favour to the colonist or importer; but a few arguments will be sufficient to show that it is founded upon a conscientious right, of which he cannot be deprived as long as equal justice is made the basis of a free government.

An importer of merchandise either comes voluntarily into our ports to seek the best market for his goods, or else he is compelled to do so, that the nation may be benefited by having the first offer



of the purchases to be made. In the former case, he has no right to complain of disappointment, much less can he reasonably expect a drawback of duties should he withdraw his goods from the market in question. But where compulsion is employed, the case is totally changed: The sugar planter must not only bring his sugar to a British market, but he must transport it in a British bottom, and is besides forced to pay certain duties before he is permitted to sell. It is not until the home consumption is supplied that the sugar can be sent to a foreign market; and if the cargo should perish by any accident, the owner loses both capital and duty. How then can it be a hardship for the mother country to restore the duty paid upon a freight, of which she enjoyed the first offer, and of which she consequently received the greatest chance of advantage? The foreign market, indeed, will not bear this additional duty; and if it be required, it is an extortion which has not necessity for its plea, as sugar is not a necessary but a luxury of life. Hitherto we have only spoken of raw sugar, but these observations apply equally to refined sugar; for what is called bounty, is little more than a modification of the drawback, the money allowed beyond the original duty being no more than adequate to the loss of weight in the raw commodity.

By the nearest calculation\*, the apparent loss to

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\* For this the reader is referred to the original work

to the revenue is but one shilling the hundred weight, and no more; but as every hoghead of sugar loses considerably in weight after the duty is paid, and before it is worked, and as, by the present regulations respecting it, there is duty paid for more sugar than the cask contains, it is a moderate calculation upon all sugars to say, that every hoghead loses 76lb. which, at 15s. per cwt. the import duty, is a loss of 7s. 6d. to the planter, and the like clear gain to the exchequer. The average annual import of raw sugar is about 160,000 hogheads of 12 cwt. nett. Now, supposing every ounce of this to be exported, and receive 15s. per cwt. of drawback; yet, from the difference of weight occasioned by unavoidable waste, government would have received in duties between 50,000l. and 60,000l. per annum more than it refunds in drawbacks and bounties on the same commodity.

We come, in the *next* place, to answer the third objection, viz. commercial monopoly.

As a compensation for the restrictions to which the colonists must submit, they have been entitled to this exclusive privilege of access to the British market for the sale of their produce. This arrangement has been called the Double Monopoly. The price at which the colonists purchase their share of the advantage is the following: They are prohibited from purchasing from foreigners many articles which Britain does not supply of herself, and which foreigners could sell at a cheaper rate; so that Britain is benefited by a double freightage.

The articles which foreigners could afford at a more reasonable rate, are very numerous; yet so strictly have the navigation laws been adhered to, that on one ever memorable and dreadful occasion, the lives of 15,000 miserable negroes were sacrificed to the system, as has been before related. On the same principle, Great Britain does not permit the West Indian to avail himself of the cheapness and security of neutral bottoms in the time of war, that her naval power and shipping may continue the more formidable. Great as this hardship is, it is inferior in pressure to that restriction which interdicts the colonist from refining, beyond the first state of manufacture, the staple produce of his islands, and binds him to bring home every commodity in its raw state. This is effected by means of enormous duties. To prohibit a great body, says the author of the *Wealth of Nations*, from making all they can of every part of their own produce, or from employing their stock and their industry in 'the way that they judge most advantageous to themselves, is a manifest violation of the most sacred rights of mankind. But to this violation the West Indian must submit, as the price for what advantages he may reap from the double monopoly, and the benefit of being considered as a British subject. From this interdiction imposed upon the manufacturing of articles of West Indian growth in their own soil, no advantage arises in the main; on the contrary, Great Britain would be a considerable gainer if full liberty was permitted to the planter to refine the sugar which he raises. To illustrate



this in as brief a manner as possible, it need only be mentioned, that the drainage of raw sugar, occasioned by its passage homeward, has been valued, at an average of four years, at 560,000*l.* and the loss thus sustained by the revenue may be easily calculated. In the next place, there is a positive loss, at the best calculation, of 1*l.* 5*s.* 4*d.* value of melasses on every hoghead of Muscavado sugar shipped to Great Britain, exclusive of the loss in the raw material before stated. Laying aside the consideration of freight, it must occur to every one, that great and decisive advantage would accrue to the planter from the refining of his own sugar, from the circumstance that his capital and his stock are already provided to his hands. He not only possesses the raw material, but also the buildings and apparatus of all kinds, requiring but small additional expence to complete the manufacture.

There is no doubt but that the loss sustained by the government, from the lesser exportation of Muscavado sugar, would be made up by additional levies upon the article in a state of refinement: but in this case, the revenue would not be diminished; the profits of the planter would be perfectly sufficient, and Britain would purchase her sugar cheaper than she can obtain it at present.

But it is singular, that in spite of all that the public has seen and acknowledged upon the reciprocity of benefits that takes place between the colonies and Britain; though it has been proved on several occasions, and by a thousand unanswerable

arguments, that the West Indies, in return for the monopoly which binds the mother country to encourage and protect her commerce, yields a compensation of benefits not inferior to what she receives; yet of late the public attention has been violently attracted to a project which, without conferring benefits upon the British themselves, must cruelly and undeservedly procure the ruin of these islands. This proposal is to cultivate sugar upon the distant plains of the East Indies, and to procure our sugar from colonies who purchase no article worth consideration from home; who have rather seemed disposed to ruin than augment our manufactures; and lastly, whose distance must make their commerce less profitable than that to the West. Besides, it is not proposed to be a change from monopoly to free trade, but only a transference of monopoly from the West to the East.

In fine, Were an uncourtly West Indian permitted, freely and explicitly, to expostulate with ministers upon the treatment of the colonies for these 20 years past, he might display a statement of facts, unpleasant indeed to hear, but extremely difficult to controvert or elude. Such a person might, without any deviation from truth, present them with a detail not unlike the following.

“It is well known (he might say) that the sufferings of those colonies which fell under the domination of France were very great; and that, at the conclusion of the war, such of the planters as survived the vexations of the enemy, and were not ac-

tually bankrupts in their fortunes, as a great many were, were reduced to embarrassments nearly approaching to it. For the honour of the British name, it ought to be recorded, that no sooner was an island taken from under the British protection, than the property of its inhabitants was treated, to all intents and purposes, as the property of natural-born enemies. Your vessels of war cruised upon them, and made prize of our effects, wherever they were to be found. Even neutral flags afforded no protection against your depredations; until the highest authorities in the law had pronounced such conduct to be illegal, and parliament interfered, to facilitate the passage of the products of Grenada, which, having surrendered at discretion, were still exposed to capture. Even the hurricane, that most awful visitation of Providence, which usually arrests the vengeance of men, and by exciting softer affections, disposes them to acts of fraternity, lost its usual effect of procuring a passage even for the necessaries of life; and those whom the storm had spared, your rapacity would have starved.

“ The war ceased, and with it the dominion of France over all the islands (Tobago excepted, which was ceded to her in perpetuity); but our miseries still survived; for the treaty of 1782, which gave peace and independence to North America, only transferred hostilities to the sugar colonies; as they have never ceased, from that time to the present, to be harassed with vexations of one kind or another. The first measure by which they were annoyed,



arose in the policy of the state. It was thought necessary to dissolve their connection with the continent. The consequence of which was, that Jamaica, being deprived of its produce of negro provisions, by a series of tempests and unfavourable seasons, lost 15,000 of her slaves by famine. And yet you talk of humanity, as if it were a national virtue!

“ What since has been the disposition of Great Britain towards us, may be learnt from the popular conversation at this day; from the conduct of large bodies associated for the abolition of the slave trade, and ultimately of slavery itself; from the establishments projected, and in execution, on the coast of Africa, with views declaredly hostile to our interests; from the numbers of inflammatory paragraphs and calumnious pamphlets that daily issue from the press, to prejudice the West Indian planters in the public opinion; from the indefatigable circulation of addresses, exhorting the people to the disuse of West Indian sugar; and lastly, from various proposals with respect to the reduction of the price of the commodity. In so many shapes does this spirit manifest itself, as to give just grounds to conclude, that something like a decided purpose is entertained for the total ruin of the sugar colonies, and that the vexations we have hitherto experienced, are only preliminaries to the system which is to be consummated by the grand measure of raising of rivals to our monopoly in your establishments in the east.

“ It has been imputed, as a reproach to the fu-

gar colonies, that they are expensive, and that they engage you in war. Never were the West Indian colonies the cause of war; but whenever the two nations of France and England are engaged in any quarrel, from whatever cause it may arise, thither they repair to decide their differences. They are made the theatre of war; they are the victims, but never the origin of the contest. The inhabitants of the French and English islands live in an habitual intercourse of good offices, and would wish for eternal peace; and they have reason for it, for what are they to gain by war?

“ When, therefore, we reflect upon the various means which have been employed to prejudice the West Indian planters, we find ourselves totally at a loss to conjecture what it is that could excite so much acrimony against us; as there exists none of those causes which usually provoke the envy of men and exasperate their malignity. The West Indians are not remarkable (with very few exceptions) either for their gigantic opulence, or an ostentatious display of it. They do not emerge rapidly from poverty and insignificance, into conspicuous notice. Such of them as possess fortunes of distinguished magnitude, as some gentlemen of Jamaica are happy enough to do, are not the creation of a day. Their names are to be found in the earliest records of the island, and their adventures were coeval with the first establishment of the colony, and of course their properties, such as we now find them, are the fruits of the toil of successive generations. Many there

are, indeed, who have competencies that enable them to live, with economy, in this country : but the great mass are men of oppressed fortunes, consigned by debt to unremitting drudgery in the colonies, with a hope, which eternally mocks their grasp, of happier days, and a release from their embarrassments. Such are the times which we have lately seen, that, if suffered to continue, might possibly have given effect to their exertions, and have lifted them out of their distresses. But it seems that poverty is considered as the legitimate heritage of every West Indian planter. They may encounter loss, and struggle with adversity ; but never are they to profit of contingencies that may enable them to repair the disasters of adverse fortune, to which they are peculiarly subjected by their position.

“ If the minister means the ruin of the West Indian colonies, he may effect it by promoting the extensive cultivation of the sugar-cane in the East Indies, with a view to the supply of any part of the European market ; and we have only equity to oppose to power, for we cannot repel injury. Murmurs would be unavailing, and our resentments impotent ; but it would be a base desertion of interest, to suffer ourselves to be intimidated into a voluntary surrender of right. We protest, therefore, against any innovation, and adhere to the system of double monopoly : There we are at anchor ; and if there is no security any where against the storms and afflictions of Providence, so neither is there, against the injustice of men ; but we shall at least have the



consolation of not suffering the reproaches of our own bosoms, or of leaving accusers in our posterity !”

To a remonstrance like the foregoing, it is difficult to conceive what answer could be given. If, however, it is not the wish or intention of government to violate the national faith with the colonies, their apprehension on that head may be easily removed. In this important business, satisfaction being given to the rest, if candour were to dictate an answer, although much must be admitted, much too might be said. It might be urged, That to the mother country the colonies are indebted for their birth, origin, and government. If, during the fatal contest which terminated in the dismemberment of the empire, they suffered their share of calamity, it must be remembered that all the islands, Tobago alone excepted, which suffered the horrors of capture, were, at the peace, restored to the blessings of British liberty and protection. They possess every characteristic of a free people ; in their internal concerns, they are taxed by their own representatives, and have not the image only, but the spirit and substance of an English constitution.



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APPENDIX.

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## A P P E N D I X.

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FROM the following appendix, the reader may form a tolerable notion of the protection which the law maintains over slaves in the West Indies. In the work from which this is abridged, the latest act of the assembly of Jamaica upon the subject, has been given in full; but in what follows there is merely a selection of all the material clauses of the act.

JAMAICA, *ff.*

AN ACT to repeal an act, entitled “ An act to repeal several acts and clauses of acts respecting slaves, and for the better order and government of slaves, and for other purposes;” and also to repeal the several acts and clauses of acts, which were repealed by the act entitled as aforesaid; and for consolidating, and bringing into one act, the several laws relating to slaves, and for giving them further protection and security; for altering the mode of trial of slaves charged with capital offences; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS it is for the public good, that all the laws respecting the order and government of slaves,

should be consolidated and brought into one law, in order to prevent confusion, and that justice may more effectually be executed respecting slaves; and whereas it is found necessary, for the purpose of giving further security to slaves, that the mode of trial of slaves charged with capital offences should be altered; and whereas, in order thereto, it is necessary that all the herein after mentioned laws, and clauses of laws, should be repealed; viz. &c. &c. &c. We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the assembly of this your Majesty's island of Jamaica, do most humbly beseech your Majesty that it may be enacted, Be it therefore enacted, by the Lieutenant-Governor, Council, and Assembly of the said island, and it is hereby enacted and ordained by the authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this act all and every the said herein before mentioned laws, and clauses of laws, and every part thereof, be and stand annulled, repealed, and made void, to all intents and purposes whatsoever; any thing in the said laws, and clauses of laws, or in any other law contained to the contrary, in any wise notwithstanding.

And whereas nothing can contribute more to the good order and government of slaves than the humanity of their owners, in providing for, and supplying them with good and wholesome provisions, and proper and sufficient clothing, and all such other things as may be proper and necessary for them, during their being in a state of slavery: For which end and purpose, Be it further enacted



by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the passing of this act, every master, owner, or possessor, of any plantation or plantations, pens, or other lands whatsoever, shall allot and appoint a sufficient quantity of land for every slave he shall have in possession upon, or belonging to, such plantation or plantations, pens, or other lands, as and for the proper ground of every such slave, and allow such slave sufficient time to work the same, in order to provide him, her, or themselves, with sufficient provisions for his, her, or their maintenance : and also, all such masters, owners, or possessors of plantations; pens, or other lands, shall plant upon such plantations, pens, or other lands, in ground provisions, at least one acre of land for every *ten* negroes \* that he shall be possessed of on such plantation, pen, or other lands, over and above the negroe grounds aforesaid ; which lands shall be kept up in a planter-like condition, under the penalty of 5*l*.

And, for the better encouragement of slaves to do their duty to their masters, owners or possessors, Be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That every master, owner, or possessor of slaves, shall, once in every year, provide and give to each slave they shall be possessed of proper and sufficient clothing, to be approved of by the justices and vestry of the parish where such master, owner, or

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\* In the former act an acre of provisions was allotted to every *four* negroes, exclusive as above, but it was found an exorbitant and unnecessary allowance, and the alteration was made as it now stands expressly that the law might be enforced.

posseffor of fuch slave resides, under the penalty of 50l.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforefaid, That every mafter, owner, proprietor, or poffeffor of flaves, his or her overfeer or chief manager, at their giving in an account of their flaves and flock to the juftices and veftry, on the 28th day of December in every year, fhall, under the penalty of 50l. for every neglect, alfo give in, on oath, an account of the quantity of land in ground-provifions, over and above the negro-grounds, upon fuch plantation, pen, or other fettlement, where there are lands proper for the cultivation of fuch provifions; and where there are not lands proper for fuch purpofes, then an account, on oath, of the provifion made on fuch plantation, pen, or other fettlement, or means adopted for the maintenance of the flaves thereon; and fhall alfo, at the fame time, and under the like penalty, give in an account, on oath, of the nature and quantity of the clothing actually ferved to each flave on fuch plantation, pen, or other fettlement, for the approbation of the juftices and veftry as aforefaid; and fhall, likewise, at the fame time declare, on oath, that he hath infpected the negro-grounds (where fuch grounds are allotted) of fuch plantation, pen, or fettlement, according to the directions of this act.

And, in order to prevent any perfon from mutilating or difmembering any flave or flaves, Be it further enacted by the authority aforefaid, That if any mafter, miftrefs, owner, poffeffor, or other per-

son whatsoever, shall, at his, her, or their own will and pleasure, or by his, her, or their direction, or with his, her, or their knowledge, sufferance, privy, or consent, mutilate or dismember any slave or slaves, he, she, or they shall be liable to be indicted for each offence in the supreme court of judicature, or in any of the assize courts of this island; and, upon conviction, shall be punished by fine, not exceeding 100*l.* and imprisonment not exceeding 12 months, for each and every slave so mutilated or dismembered; and such punishment is declared to be without prejudice to any action that could or might be brought at common law, for recovery of damages for or on account of the same: And, in very atrocious cases, where the owner of such slave or slaves shall be convicted of such offence, the court, before whom such offender shall have been tried and convicted, are hereby empowered, in case they shall think it necessary, for the future protection of such slave or slaves, to declare him, her, or them free and discharged from all manner of servitude, to all intents and purposes whatsoever: And, in all such cases, the court are hereby empowered and authorized, if to them it shall appear necessary, to order and direct the said fine of 100*l.* to be paid to the justices and vestry of the parish to which the said slave or slaves belonged, to the use of the said parish; the said justices and vestry, in consideration thereof, paying to such of the said slave or slaves so made free the sum of 10*l.* per annum for his, her, or their maintenance and support during life; and in

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case any slave or slaves shall suffer any before-described mutilations, such slave or slaves, on his, her, or their application to any justice of the peace, the said justice of the peace shall be, and is hereby directed, required, and empowered, on view, and certain conviction of the fact, to send such slave or slaves to the nearest workhouse where such offence shall be committed, and such slave or slaves shall be there safely kept, and carefully attended at the expence of such parish, until such time as there may be a legal meeting of the justices and vestry of such parish; which justices and vestry so met, are hereby created and appointed a council of protection of such slave or slaves: And the said justices and vestry, so met, are hereby directed and empowered to make further and full inquiry, upon view, into the commitment of the mutilation of such slave or slaves; and, if to them it shall appear proper, the said justices and vestry are hereby empowered and required to prosecute to effect such owner or owners; the expence of which prosecution shall be paid by the parish where such offence shall be committed: And in case the owner or owners of such slave or slaves shall appear capable of paying the costs and charges of such before-mentioned prosecution, the said justices and vestry are hereby empowered to commence suit or suits against such owner or owners of such slave or slaves, and recover all costs and charges out of purse, by them laid out and expended in such suit or suits: And the keeper or supervisor of the workhouse where such mutilated slave

or slaves shall have been first committed, is hereby directed and required, upon due notice of the first meeting of the justices and vestry of the parish where the offence was committed, to produce such mutilated slave or slaves, for the inspection and direction of such justices and vestry, under the penalty of 20l. for every neglect, in not producing before such justices and vestry such slave or slaves.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any person hereafter shall wantonly, willingly, or bloody-mindedly kill, or cause to be killed, any negro or other slave, such person so offending shall, on conviction, be adjudged guilty of felony, without benefit of clergy, and shall suffer death accordingly for the said offence: Provided always, that such conviction shall not extend to the corrupting the blood, or the forfeiture of lands or tenements, goods or chattels; any law, custom, or usage to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the passing of this act, any person or persons that shall wantonly or cruelly whip, maltreat, beat bruise, wound, or shall imprison or keep in confinement, without sufficient support, any slave or slaves, shall be subject to be indicted for the same in the supreme court of judicature, or in either of the courts of assize, or courts of quarter sessions in this island; and, upon being thereof legally convicted, he, she, or they, shall suffer such punishment, by fine or imprisonment, or

both, as the judges or justices of such courts shall think proper to inflict ; any law, custom, or usage to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding: And such punishment is hereby declared to be without prejudice to any action at common law that could or might be brought for the recovery of damages for and on account of the same, in case such slave or slaves shall not be the property of the offender.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That for the future, all slaves in this island shall be allowed the usual number of holidays that were allowed at the usual seasons of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide : Provided, That at every such respective season, no two holidays shall be allowed to follow or succeed immediately one after the other, except at Christmas, when they shall be allowed Christmas-day, and also the day immediately succeeding ; any law, custom, or usage, to the contrary notwithstanding: And if any master, owner, guardian, or attorney, of any plantation or settlement, or the overseer of such plantation or settlement, shall presume, at the seasons aforesaid, to allow any holidays to any slave belonging to any such plantation or settlement, other than as directed by this act to be given, every person so offending shall forfeit the sum of 5*l*.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That every field-slave on such plantation or settlement shall, on work days, be allowed, according to custom, half an hour for breakfast, and two hours for dinner ; and that no slaves shall be com-



pelled to any manner of field-work upon the plantation before the hour of five in the morning, or after the hour of seven at night, except during the time of crop, under the penalty of 50*l.* to be recovered against the overseer, or other person having the care of such slaves.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That on the 28th day of December in every year (the time of giving in as aforesaid), or within 30 days after, the owner, overseer, or manager of every plantation, pen, or settlement, shall give in, on oath, an account of all the births and deaths of the slaves of such plantation, pen, or settlement, for the preceding year, under the penalty of 50*l.* to be recovered from the owner of such plantation, pen, or other settlement.

And whereas the permitting and suffering negro and other slaves to keep horses, mares, mules, or geldings, is attended with many and great mischiefs to the island in general; In order, therefore, to remedy the same, Be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the passing of this act, the master, owner, proprietor, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or other person, in possession of every plantation or pen in this island, having on any such plantation or pen any horse, mare, mule, or gelding, the reputed property of any slave or slaves, knowing the same to be such, shall cause them to be taken up, and shall produce them at the most public place in the parish where taken up, at such time as the justices and vestry

shall, by advertisement in the public newspapers, appoint for that purpose, and that such horses, mares, mules, and geldings, be then and there sold and disposed of at public outcry ; and if any master, owner, proprietor, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or other person as aforesaid, shall neglect or refuse so doing, each and every of them shall, for every neglect or refusal, respectively forfeit the sum of 30l. to be recovered in a summary manner before any two justices of the peace for the parish or precinct where such neglect or refusal shall happen, by the oath of one or more credible witness or witnesses ; which penalty shall be to the use of the person informing.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the passing of this act, no master, owner, proprietor, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or other person, in possession of any plantation, pen, or settlement, shall knowingly permit or suffer any slave or slaves to keep on such plantation, pen, or settlement, any horse, mare, mule, or gelding ; and, in case of so doing, shall, for every offence, forfeit the sum of 30l. to be recovered in manner aforesaid.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in all cases where the punishment of death is inflicted, the execution shall be performed in a public part of the parish and with due solemnity ; and care shall be taken by the gaoler or deputy-marshal, that the criminal is free from intoxication at the time of his trial, and from thence to

and at the time of his execution, under the penalty of 5*l*. and the mode of such execution shall be hanging by the neck, and no other; and the body shall be afterwards disposed of in such manner as the court shall direct: And provided also, that where several slaves shall be capitally convicted for the same offence, one only shall suffer death, except in cases of murder or rebellion.

And whereas there are many inferior crimes and misdemeanours committed by slaves, which ought to be punished in a summary manner, by order of the magistrates; Be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, That, from and after the passing of this act, it shall and may be lawful for any two justices of the peace to hear and determine, in a summary manner, all such crimes and misdemeanours, giving sufficient notice to the owner or proprietor of such slave or slaves, or his or her attorney or attorneys, or the person having the care of such slave or slaves, of the time and place of trial, and to order and direct such punishment to be inflicted on them as such justices, in their judgment, shall think fit, not exceeding 50 lashes or six months confinement to hard labour; the expences of which trial shall not exceed 10*s*. to the constable, and shall be paid by the master, owner, or employer of such slave or slaves; and in case such master, owner, or employer of such slave or slaves shall refuse or neglect to pay such expences, it shall and may be lawful for the said justices, or either of them, to issue his or their warrant, under his or their hand



and seal, directed to any constable, for levying the same on the goods and chattels of such master, owner, or employer, and to sell the same at public outcry, for the purpose of paying such expences, together with the charges attending the granting and executing such warrant and sale of goods and chattels, returning the overplus, if any, to the owner.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall not be lawful for any justice of the peace, sitting on the trial of any slave or slaves, or otherwise, to sentence or order any slave to be mutilated or maimed for any offence whatsoever.

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A

SHORT HISTORY

OF THE

FRENCH COLONY IN ST. DOMINGO.

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CHAPTER I.

Political State of St. Domingo previous to the Year 1789.

THIS colony, like all other West India settlements, was inhabited by three different orders of people. The pure whites constitute the first distinction, the free blacks and the people of colour formed the second, and lowest in the scale stood the unemancipated negroes. The people of colour, known by the name of *Sang Melée*, or *Gens de Couleur*, were illegitimate descendants of black and white parents. According as they approached to the complexion of negroes or whites, their casts and appearance were various; but they were all known in common language by the name of Mulatto. From the unfrequency of marriage in St. Domingo, their numbers became almost equal to those of the whites; the latter being estimated at 30,000, the former at 24,000.

Previous to the year 1789 the government of St. Domingo was administered by an officer called the Intendant, and a Governor General, both nominated

by the Crown, and invested with authority for three years. Their powers were in some cases distinct, in others united. In the latter instances their joint administration was arbitrary, unlimited, and minute, extending to every possible question in finance and police. The laws were enacted at their command, vacancies in councils and courts of justice were filled up by their choice, and the crown lands were distributed by their bounty. The sole security of the people lay in the contention that happily arose between the sharers of this exorbitant power; but even in these disputes the governor's authority preponderated. His supreme command over the naval and military force; his power of imprisoning without a cause, and of allowing no arrest but with his own approbation; made the administrators of justice his slaves, and his will superior to the law. The office of the intendant, though less absolute, was still more dangerous to the virtue of its possessor. The man who had the controul and inspection of all duties and taxes, and who was permitted to apply these treasures as his choice directed, must have been blessed with uncommon integrity to avoid corruption. The taxes and duties, of which we speak, were imposed by a self-elected assembly, composed of the two supreme officers just now mentioned, some commandants of militia, and presidents of provincial councils, and, in mockery of the people, was called the Colonial Assembly.

The colony was divided into three provinces, the Northern, Western, and Southern. There lay an



appeal from the sentences of the inferior courts distributed through these divisions at the superior courts of Cape François and Port au Prince. These were composed of the governor and his deputies, the intendant, King's lieutenants, twelve counsellors, and four *assesseurs*. The lieutenants were military officers, unconnected with the civil power, and wholly under the authority of the governor. The counsellors were little more independent. The Prince de Rohan, when acting as governor in this colony, seized them on their seats of justice, and put them on board a ship in irons: They were conveyed to Paris, and for a long time immured in the Bastille, without the benefit of a trial.

The consequence of such undue influence over the ministers of justice may be well conceived. Corruption and iniquity were notorious in their decisions. An appeal lay, however, to the king, and the decision was generally more fair.

The colony was divided into fifty-two parishes, each of which furnished one or more companies of whites, blacks, and people of colour, to serve in the militia. The establishment of the King's troops was from 2000 to 3000 men.

A colony thus governed must have depended for its happiness principally upon the disposition of the governor who was imposed. Happily the progress of improvement had so far emancipated them from their ancient prejudices, that all respectability and happiness were not allowed to centre in high birth and connections. The fruits of commerce and in-

dustry had so far blessed the plebeian part of the community, that they enjoyed their wealth without being despised for the want of titles. But the triumph of justice over prejudice extended only thus far: Whatever apology may be offered for the prevalent custom of undervaluing individuals from the sole circumstances of their colour, the fact cannot be denied, that the people of colour in this colony were subjected to the most flagrant injustice and contempt\*. The negro that was enslaved had a master, whose interest was pledged to defend him from injury; but the mulattoes, considered as slaves of the public, were injured and insulted, without hope of redress. When they had completed the age of manhood, they were compelled to serve three years in the army; and when their military service expired, they had to work the greater part of the year in a dreadful state of slavery upon the highways. That every spark of generous ambition might be quenched in their minds, and every possibility of emerging from their debasement excluded from their situation, they were not permitted to hold any office of public capacity, and were besides debarred from following any profession in private life that conferred respectability, or required a liberal education. The mulatto was prohibited by law

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\* Mr. Edwards, in this place, endeavours philosophically to *account for*, in other words, to palliate, this prevalent propensity of mankind to despise the colour of the individual, without regard to his merits.

from becoming a priest, a lawyer, a physician, a surgeon, an apothecary, or schoolmaster. The smallest affinity to African blood tainted the whole character of the individual with contempt; and of consequence no white man of character would deign to connect himself in marriage with a woman of colour, or a negress. The practice of the law impiously gave sanction to popular prejudice. The mulatto who only struck a white was condemned to have his right hand cut off; whilst the white man, for a similar offence, was punished with an insignificant fine. It is true this severity of the law was in some measure modified by the manners of the people, who would have been unwilling to adhere rigorously to such unmerciful edicts. Another circumstance in favour of the mulattoes was their ability to hold property to any amount, by which means the more opulent had the power of bribing the venal administrators of justice, though at the same time this superiority of wealth did not abate that insolence which the meaner whites were at all times disposed to show them.

The enslaved negroes, who constituted the third class of inhabitants, amounted in the year 1789 to 480,000. As early as the reign of Lewis XIV. a code of legislature had been passed in their favour, humanely intended, and honourable to its author. But where fear is the foundation of a government, as in all countries where slavery exists it must necessarily be, the doctrine of coercion, and not of right, is to be enforced, or authority cannot long be main-



tained. The usage of the negroes in the colonies of Britain has been already described ; and in this colony their usage was almost exactly similar. If any difference is to be observed between the usage of French and English slaves, it is, that in the latter, they receive more animal food ; in the former, they are more comfortably clothed. Upon the whole, the situation of all ranks of people in St. Domingo was less miserable than might have been expected to result from a government so depraved as we have seen it. In spite of political evils, signs of prosperity were visible ; their towns were opulent ; their markets plentiful ; their commerce extensive, and their cultivation on the increase. Such was the state of the French colony in St. Domingo in 1788. In this eventful year the principles of liberty, which had been brought from America to France, began to pervade also her colonies. The necessity of new arrangements, and a severe amendment of inveterate and multiplied abuses, became apparent. From the effects of this vigorous effort, the reformation of evils, many important lessons are to be learned : We shall therefore make them the subject of the following pages.

## CHAPTER II.

From the Revolution of 1789, to the Meeting of the First General Colonial Assembly.

AT the ever memorable period (December 1788), when the States General of France were convened, the governor of the French part of St. Domingo was M. Duchilleau, a man who was supposed secretly to favour the popular pretensions. But the influence which he had been permitted to retain from this supposition, gradually vanished from his hands as the spirit of innovation became bolder and more decisive. It was therefore in vain that he attempted to suppress the meetings of the revolutionists, who, in spite of his proclamations, elected and sent home to France eighteen representatives (six for each province), as the new constituents of St. Domingo. By the time of their arrival, the States General had declared themselves the National Assembly; but though friendly to the system of representation, that august body strenuously maintained that eighteen members was too great a number for St. Domingo to send, and six were only allowed to sit.

Though admitted to a share in the legislation, the West India colonies were at this time far from being popular in France. The nation, enthusiastic in their sentiments respecting the rights of mankind, could not look with pleasure upon a body of men who challenged freedom to themselves, but refused it to

others. The popular indignation was made stronger every day by the speeches of that powerful association of Amis des Noirs \*; and the extravagancies of the French planters resident in France served also to augment the general detestation. The society of the Amis des Noirs was an imitation of a London association, who had assumed the same name, but not for exactly the same purposes. The society of Englishmen had endeavoured to mollify the treatment of slaves, by persuading government to interdict the African trade. The society we speak of avowed their detestation of slavery itself, as well as the trade, and condemned those abettors of liberty who dared to declare themselves possessors of men. At the same time, the Amis des Noirs kept up an intimate connection with those mulattoes from St. Domingo who were educating in France, endeavoured to convince them of their right to be emancipated from the miseries under which they laboured, and warmly appealed to the generosity of the nation in their behalf. The heart of every Frenchman was interested in their hardships, and the indignation against the white planters bore a serious aspect.

This animosity against the possessors of slaves had probably some share in the minds of the assembly itself, when they passed their celebrated declaration, in which they maintained that all mankind are born and continue equal and free in their rights. Hi-

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\* The friends of the blacks.



therto the white inhabitants of St. Domingo had regarded the Amis de Noirs, and indeed the French nation at large, with no very favourable eye; for they felt that the sentiments of unqualified freedom, which were avowed in the mother country, threatened destruction to their authority over their slaves. This declaration perfected their dislike to the Amis de Noirs; for they regarded it as a dangerous and unpardonable blow, levelled at their power over the negroes and mulattoes. The French, before this period, had decreed the institution of colonial assemblies; but the orders had been effected in a dilatory manner, and the colonists of St. Domingo did not wait for their command. Large assemblies had been constituted in the provinces, and parochial meetings were held for the better communication of their sentiments. The provincial assemblies, among other resolutions, decreed their intention of being better represented, and declared their purpose of holding a legal and full assembly of colonial representatives, as a measure of expediency, if orders to that purpose did not arrive within three months. In the mean time, the mulattoes in St. Domingo, instructed in their rights, and informed of the sentiments of the French in their behalf, called aloud for emancipation, and became excessively turbulent. But they were soon overpowered, for they could not act in concert. The provincial assemblies, it is but justice to say, did not seem averse to moderation, and were less severe in their treatment of prisoners than might have been expected. But the rage of the populace

was brutal and unrestrained against the mulattoes themselves, but more especially those whites who had the disinterested generosity to avow themselves their friends. A magistrate at Petit Goave (Mons. Ferrand de Beaudierre) had resolved upon connecting himself in marriage with a woman of colour; but, apprehensive of being blamed for the measure, he attacked the established prejudices of his countrymen against the people of colour, and drew up a memorial in their behalf, in which they were made to claim the full benefit of the national declaration of rights. He was arrested for sedition, and imprisoned by the parochial committee; but the mob took him by force from his confinement, and, in spite of the municipality, barbarously put him to death.

Early in the month of January 1790, the royal mandate for convoking an assembly was received. The time and place of its meeting, as well as some other circumstances relative to its constitution, being thought inconsistent with the welfare of the colony, they were treated with contempt, and matters accommodated to the wishes of the inhabitants. Word was speedily conveyed to the mother country of the dispositions of St. Domingo; and the mercantile towns, alarmed by the danger that threatened their commerce, implored the government for conciliatory measures. The assembly took the matter into solemn consideration, and, by a great majority, it was decreed that their intention never had been to intermeddle with the internal affairs of the

colony; that the management of their internal legislature was entirely their own; and that the assembly pledged themselves to make no innovation, directly or indirectly, in the system of commerce, in which the colonies were already concerned. However grateful this declaration might have been to the whites of St. Domingo, it occasioned discontent and remonstrances on the part of the philanthropic friends of the blacks. They regarded it as an unwarrantable sanction of the African traffic, and a confession that the planters of St. Domingo were not colonists, but an independent people. The intention of the assembly seems, however, to have been patriotic; and it is certainly most reasonable to suppose that this respectable body of legislators had the preservation of the colony, and not the continuation of slavery, in view when they passed the above decree. With the example of America before their eyes, it was hardly to be conceived that the inhabitants of St. Domingo would have continued long the colonists of France, had the animosity which once prevailed been kept alive by a decree of an opposite nature. How far the provincial representatives were disposed to be independent in their proceedings, will be seen from what passed in all their meetings till their final dissolution. Of these we shall treat in the subsequent chapter.



## CHAPTER III.

Proceedings of the General Colonial Assembly, till its final Dissolution, and the Embarkation of its Members for France.

ON the 16th of April 1790, the General Assembly of St. Domingo met at the town of St. Marc, and consisted of 213 members. The provincial assemblies, however, still continued to exercise their functions, or appointed committees during their intermission. The amelioration of the slave-laws, and the relief of the people of colour from some of their severest hardships, were prudently made the first subjects of their deliberation. The rectification of gross abuses that prevailed in the courts of judicature, and could no longer be endured; in succession to this business, the plan of a new colonial government kept them in employment till the 28th of May. At this period the governor-general was a *Mons. Peynier*, a man of strong aristocratical principles, and from whom the whole tribe of civil officers, whose views had been blasted by the late revolution, derived secret encouragement and support. Those officers also who held military commissions, and had been accustomed to share in the system of tyranny, joined the hidden association, and meditated the ruin of the new constitution. *Peynier* continued at the head of this infamous coalition till he was displaced by the superior abilities of *Chevalier Mauduit*, colonel of the regiment of Port au

Prince, who arrived at St. Domingo. He had come by way of Italy, and at Turin had taken leave of the Count d'Artois, to whose fortune he was attached. His first proceeding evinces that he was a villain of the most accomplished kind. He declared himself the patron and protector of the mulattoes, till his unsuspected hypocrisy gained them over to his side. With their assistance, he proposed to establish once more the ancient system of injustice; and thus unfortunately succeeded in dividing two classes of men, whose views, if cemented by good understanding, might have effected their mutual happiness, and averted many calamities. Had the planters been steady to each other, the projects of their enemies might perhaps have been blasted; but the provincial assemblies disputed with each other, and thus gave an opportunity to their common enemy, the executive power, to declare hostilities with more effect. The ostensible motive on the part of government for beginning their attack upon the representatives of the island, was the following celebrated decree, which the Assembly had made on the 28th of May 1790. The preamble to the decree declares the right of confirming the laws inherent in the assembly, and consequently incapable of being delegated. The articles subjoined are the ten following:—

“ 1. THE legislative authority, in every thing which relates to the internal concerns of the colony (*regime interieur*), is vested in the assembly of its repre-

representatives, which shall be called *the General Assembly of the French Part of St. Domingo*.

“ 2. No act of the legislative body, in what relates to the internal concerns of the colony, shall be considered *as a law definitive*, unless it be made by the representatives of the French part of St. Domingo, freely and legally chosen, and confirmed by the King.

“ 3. In cases of urgent necessity, a legislative decree of the general assembly, in what relates to the internal concerns of the colony, shall be considered as a *law provisional*. In all such cases, the decree shall be notified forthwith to the governor-general, who, within ten days after such notification, shall cause it to be published and enforced, or transmit to the general assembly his observations thereon.

“ 4. The necessity of the case on which the execution of such provisional decree is to depend, shall be a separate question, and be carried in the affirmative by a majority of two-thirds of the general assembly; the names and numbers being taken down. (*Prisès par 'appel nominal.*)

“ 5. If the governor-general shall send down his observations on any such decree, the same shall be entered in the journals of the general assembly, who shall then proceed to revise the decree, and consider the observations thereon, in three several sittings. The votes for confirming or annulling the decree, shall be given in the words *Oùs* or *Nô*, and a minute of the proceedings shall be signed by the members present, in which shall be enumerated the votes on



each side of the question; and if there appears a majority of two-thirds for confirming the decree, it shall be immediately enforced by the governor-general.

“ 6. As every law ought to be founded on the consent of those who are to be bound by it, the French part of St. Domingo shall be allowed to propose regulations concerning commercial arrangements, and the system of mutual connection (*rapports commerciaux, et autres rapports communs*), and the decrees which the national assembly shall make in all such cases, *shall not be enforced in the colony, until the general assembly shall have consented thereto.*

“ 7. In cases of pressing necessity, the importation of articles for the support of the inhabitants shall not be considered as any breach in the system of commercial regulations between St. Domingo and France; provided that the decrees to be made in such cases by the general assembly, shall be submitted to the revision of the governor-general, under the same conditions and modifications as are prescribed in Articles 3. and 5.

“ 8. Provided also, that every legislative act of the general assembly, executed provisionally, in cases of urgent necessity, shall be transmitted forthwith for the royal sanction. And if the King shall refuse his consent to any such act, its execution shall be suspended, as soon as the King's refusal shall be legally notified to the general assembly.

“ 9. A new general assembly shall be chosen every two years, and none of the members who have

served in the former assembly, shall be eligible in the new one.

“10. The general assembly decree that the preceding articles, as forming part of the constitution of the French colony in St. Domingo, shall be immediately transmitted to France, for the acceptance of the national assembly, and the King. They shall likewise be transmitted to all the parishes and districts of the colony, and be notified to the governor-general.”

Among men, even of opposite sentiments, this decree excited dissatisfaction. It was held as inconsistent with the very existence of colonial subordination, that the King's delegate should be debarred from negating the acts of assembly. In extenuation of this inconsistency, and the still more daring innovation of constituting themselves the judges of all acts of the national assembly of France, in cases of external regulation, it can only be said, that the circumstances were new, and the legislators inexperienced. That they had it in view to throw off the authority of the mother country, is not to be believed; but the report was spread, and credited, that the colony was sold to the English, and that forty millions of livres had been taken by the assembly of St. Domingo as a bribe. The western parishes recalled their delegates, while those of Cape François renounced their obedience to the whole assembly, and petitioned the governor to strip them of their authority. Peynier was pleased at the disgrace of

the representatives, both parties were averse to compromise, and a circumstance occurred to make the breach irreparable.

The Leopard, a ship of the line, lay in the harbour of Port au Prince, and the commander being attached to the governor, gave a sumptuous entertainment to his partizans of the place. The seamen, taking offence at this measure, mutinied, and declared themselves in the interest of the assembly; and the assembly, in return, made them a vote of thanks. Some partizans of the assembly at this time seized a powder magazine at Leogane. Two days after the vote of thanks had been returned to the crew of the Leopard, the governor declared them adherents to the traitors of the country, and called on all officers, civil and military, to bring them to punishment. His first direct attack was an attempt to arrest the persons of the western provincial assembly, which had been so zealous in their attachment to the general assembly. He understood that a committee of them held consultations at midnight at Port au Prince. Mons. Manduit headed the enterprise, and selecting 100 of his soldiers, resorted to the place. The house was defended by 400 national guards, and a skirmish ensued, of which the particulars are not perfectly known; but Manduit returned without accomplishing his purpose.

The general assembly, on receiving notice of this attack, immediately called upon the people to assemble, and defend their representatives. Armed troops accordingly took the field on both sides of the



dispute, and bloodshed seemed now inevitable ; but a sudden resolution of the assembly averted the impending war. They resolved in a body to repair to the mother country, and justify, in person, to the King and national assembly, their past conduct. Their numbers were reduced, by sickness and desertion, to 100, and of these 85 embarked on board the *Leopard*, amidst the applauses of people of all parties, who considered their conduct as noble and heroic. Of the 85 who embarked, we ought not to omit mentioning that 64 were fathers of families. The conduct of this body of legislators was undoubtedly, in some instances, stretched beyond their legal prerogative ; but necessity is a strong plea, and in a great degree justifies their boldest measures. That the governor and Manduit had serious intentions of restoring ancient despotism, cannot be doubted. It afterwards appeared that, distrusting the French foldiers, they had written to Cuba for Spanish subsidaries. But we must deviate from this detail for a moment, to commiserate the fate of brave, but unfortunate characters.

## CHAPTER IV.

Rebellion and Defeat of Oge, a Free Man of Colour.

THREE hundred people of colour had been collected by Manduit to oppose the forces of the assembly; but they soon became sensible of their error, demanded and procured their dismissal. Indeed, during the whole continuance of the colonial assembly, they remained much more peaceable than could have been expected; but those who were resident in France entertained somewhat more violent sentiments and wishes than their brethren in St. Domingo. Among those whose enthusiasm in the cause of delivering the people from oppression was cherished by their connection with the Amis des Noirs, one of the most distinguished was James Oge, a young man under thirty years of age. His mother possessed a coffee plantation in St. Domingo, and supported him in Paris in some degree of affluence. Under the patronage of the Amis des Noirs he had been initiated in the doctrines of equality and the rights of man, and had learned to estimate the absurdity and monstrous injustice of that prejudice which (said Gregoire), estimating a man's merit by the colour of his skin, has placed at an immense distance from each other the children of the same parent; a prejudice which stifles the voice of nature, and breaks the bands of fraternity asunder." Animated by their advice, Oge conceived the plan of

heading his people and procuring redress of their wrongs.

In order to evade the notice of government, the society resolved to procure arms and ammunition in America. Oge accordingly embarked for New England, with money and letters of credit, July 1790; but with all the secrecy that was intended, his plan was known at Paris, and his portrait sent out to St. Domingo long before he arrived. He landed in October, and got the arms he had brought conveyed to the place appointed by his brother. Six weeks after his arrival, he published a manifesto, declaring his intention of taking up arms, if the privileges of whites were not granted to all persons without distinction. During this interval, he and his brother had been busy in calling upon the people of colour to join their standard; but the mulattoes seemed unwilling to hazard an open revolt, and only 200 came to his assistance. He pitched his camp at Grande Riviere, and appointed his brother and one Chavane his lieutenants. Chavane was fierce and intrepid, but by no means so generous in his dispositions as Oge, who, with all his enthusiasm, was mild and humane. He strictly cautioned his followers against the shedding of innocent blood; but it is to be regretted, that the sense of their injuries too keenly affected the minds of his followers to permit moderation in their proceedings. They put to death the whites wherever they met them; and by a still more unjustifiable mode of conduct, took vengeance upon those of their own colour who refused



to join their standard. The townsmen of St. François immediately dispatched regulars and militia to suppress the revolvers. Their numbers being superior, they overpowered them, and took many prisoners; but Oge and his brother, with his associate, took refuge among the Spaniards in Cuba. The whites, exasperated at this effort of the mulattoes, vowed vengeance upon the whole race, and a massacre was thought to be at hand. The *petit blancs* in particular were keen in their sentiments of retaliation; so that the mulattoes seeing danger impending on all sides, flew to arms in self-defence, and fortified camps in many places. Their largest force was assembled at the town of Verette. Thither a numerous body of whites convened to resist them. M. Manduit was their commander; and by his means a consultation took place instead of a battle. The particulars of the interview are not perfectly known; but it is asserted that Manduit traiterously persuaded the mulattoes to retire for a while, till a better opportunity of effecting their vengeance should occur; that the King was their friend; and that a counter revolution would raise them to the privileges of the whites. At Aux Cayes also, Monf. Manduit effected a truce with Rigaud, the mulatto leader; but the latter declared that the calm of peace would not be permanent.

Monf. Peynier resigned his government to Monf. Blanchellaude in November 1790, whose first measure was to make a peremptory demand of Oge from the Spaniards; so that the unhappy fugitive and his companions were delivered up and brought

to a trial. Twenty of his followers were condemned to be hanged; but a more dreadful fate was reserved for himself and Chavane. He was sentenced to be broken alive, and left to perish on the wheel. Such was his punishment; and his crime was asserting the rights of his people! Chavane died as became the martyr of such a cause; amid the extremity of his torture, he uttered not a groan. Oge, possessed of more sensibility, was overpowered by the horror of his sentence, and prayed for his life with many tears. He was even so far weakened as to forget all his former magnanimity, and offered to disclose some secrets if his life was spared. It cannot be at all ascertained whether or not he made confessions of any importance; but it is said by some that he fully disclosed the most serious projects of insurrection, and named the places where the framers of these plans were in the practice of convening. The conduct of the court before whom this confession was supposed to have been made, in hurrying the unhappy Oge to immediate execution, and their well known attachment to the ancient despotic system, leaves room to suspect that these confessions were suppressed, out of resentment to the whites of the colonial assembly interest. Certain it is, that the royalists and republicans were equally hostile to the planters of this description; and unless we suppose the confessions of Oge not to have been founded in truth, the conduct of the aristocratic governors who suppressed his declarations, is to be regarded as a plan of Machiavelian policy much to be condemned.

## CHAPTER V.

Proceedings in France—Death of Colonel Mauduit—Decree of the National Assembly of the 15th May 1791—Its Consequences in St. Domingo—Rebellion and Enormities of the Negroes in the Northern Provinces—Truce between the Men of Colour and Inhabitants of Port au Prince—Proclamation by the National Assembly of the 20th of September.

WE have already recorded the embarkation of the patriotic assembly of St. Domingo for France, and the motives which impelled them to that decisive resolution. At Brest they were received with marks of approbation that seemed to prognosticate success to their design; but whether from the insidious practices of the aristocrats in their own island, who detested their system of representation, and secretly undermined their character, or from the boldness of their late conduct being deemed illegal by the national assembly, they were received by the representatives of the French with marked symptoms of aversion. Their resolutions were pronounced improper, they were personally arrested, and orders given for a new assembly to be collected. The King's order was also requested, to augment the military and naval force already in St. Domingo. Among the friends of the royal party, the disgrace of the colonial members was a matter of much exultation, but the islanders were in general displeased. Their indignation was most particularly levelled at Mauduit, colonel of the regiment of Port au Prince,



whom they regarded as the insidious calumniator of their constituents. The regiment of this unprincipled man had hitherto been his firm adherents, from the bribes which he had distributed among them ; whilst the national guards, and the other regiments from France, held them in abhorrence, and refused to do duty in their company. Finding themselves so uncomfortable, under the contempt and aversion of all around them, they began to consider their commander as the cause of their disgrace, and their gratitude for his past favours was cooled by this reflection. It was formerly related, that Mauduit, at the head of 100 grenadiers, had made an attack upon the rendezvous of a committee of the St. Domingo representatives. On this occasion he had carried off a stand of colours belonging to the national troops, and the offence was not yet erased from their memories. Mauduit, to appease the storm, offered publicly to restore the trophy, and, in presence of a vast multitude, actually resigned the colours : at the moment he gave them up, one of his own regiment called aloud, that he should ask pardon on his knees for such a trespass. He bared his bosom on hearing the demand, and it was pierced with a hundred wounds, all from his own grenadiers. No better reward could be expected from the perfidy of bribed adherents. His soldiers added cruelty to their baseness, and disgraced humanity by the insults they practised on his dead body.

In the mean time, the friends of the mulattoes in

Europe, and the people of colour resident in the mother country, were more eager in the cause of emancipation, than even the mulattoes in St. Domingo. The interest of the people of colour was so strongly supported in the national assembly, that they passed a decree, ordaining, among a number of other articles, that every person of the age of 25 years and upwards, possessing property, or having resided two years in the colony, and paid taxes, should be permitted to vote in the formation of the colonial assembly. The people of colour knew not in what acceptance to understand this decree; for they had never, on any former occasion, exercised the right of voting on occasions of this kind; and yet, as they were not excluded by name, the decree seemed virtually to comprehend them. In France the question still remained to be decided. Whilst Abbé Gregoire, with all that eloquence for which he was distinguished, supported the cause of the mulattoes, the public mind was roused into indignation against the colonists, by theatrical representations of the late barbarity they had shown to the unfortunate Ogé. Their cause at last prevailed. The mulattoes born of free parents were not only pronounced worthy of choosing their representatives, but also eligible themselves to seats in the colonial assemblies. The consequence of this decisive decree will be immediately seen.

On the 30th of June 1791, the news of it was first received in St. Domingo, at Cape François; but no words can adequately describe the indignation

which filled the minds of all parties in the island. They resolved to reject the civic oath, and to confiscate the French property in the harbour\*. It was even proposed in the provincial assembly, to pull down the national colours, and hoist the British standard in their stead. The governor-general was constrained to be a silent spectator of these enormities, having no prospect of ever recovering his authority. The election of a general assembly was the next public event of importance. They met at Cape François, and hopes were entertained that their measures might effect a reconciliation of parties; but the mulattoes had perceived too evident symptoms of their danger, and were too justly alarmed by the proscription that seemed to threaten them to continue any longer inactive. They collected in armed bodies, and waited with anxious expectation to see what measures the colonial assembly would adopt in their favour.

At this period an event, more dreadful than all the former disturbances, took place. The blacks thought the present occasion for recovering their freedom too important to be passed over. They accordingly proceeded to the assertion of that freedom, but with all the sanguinary spirit of revenge which characterizes the debased actions of a slave, and which the most ardent advocate for liberty must condemn and deplore †.

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\* An embargo actually took place.

† The account of this rebellion, as detailed by Mr. Edwards,



On the morning of the 23d of August 1791, the town of the Cape was alarmed by a report of the negroes in the adjacent parishes having revolted. The first tidings were confused, but at day-break the arrival of those who had narrowly escaped the massacre too well confirmed the tidings. The rebellion had broke out in the parish of Acul, nine miles from the city, where the whites had been butchered without distinction; and now the revolted proceeded from parish to parish, murdering the men, and ravishing the unfortunate women who fell into their hands. In a short time the sword was exchanged for the torch, and the cane-field blazed in every direction. The citizens now flew to arms, and the command of the national troops was given to the governor, whilst the women and children were put aboard the ships in the harbour for safety. During this period the lower class of whites, regarding the mulattoes in Cape François, as the immediate cause of the rebellion, marked them out for destruction; but the assembly generously took them under their protection. In gratitude for such kindness, the mulattoes offered to march as militiamen against the rebels, and their offer was accepted. After the assembly had spent a night in deliberation, amidst the glare of the surrounding fires, the militia and troops of the line were sent to meet a body of the rebels, and repulsed.

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is long and minute. The particulars are not here given so fully; not from a wish to conceal them, but because they are too horrid for relation.

them ; but the numbers of the insurgents increasing in a considerable proportion, the governor saw the propriety of acting solely on the defensive. The entrances to the town were therefore fortified, artillery were stationed on the heights, and at the river which intersects the main road ; the town was palliaded on all sides but next the sea, and the ships in the harbour secured, against the last extremity. At the same time the whites in the surrounding plantations formed into camps, and maintained a chain of posts ; but at two different places they were overpowered, and killed in great numbers\*.

In the space of two months it was computed that

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\* Amidst the disgraceful scenes which at this time took place, from the undistinguishing barbarity of the negroes, there was one striking example of fidelity, which deserves to be related. Monsieur and Madame Baillon, their daughter and son-in-law, were apprised of the revolt by one of their own slaves, who was himself in the conspiracy. He conducted them to an adjacent wood, after which he went and joined the revolters. Several times he visited them by stealth with provisions, and at last directed them to make their way to a river which led to Port Margot, assuring them they would find a canoe on a part of the river which he described. They followed his directions, but were overturned by the rapidity of the stream, and, after a narrow escape, retreated again to the mountains. The good negro again found them out, directed them to a broader part of the river, where they would find another boat. They went, and, missing the boat, gave themselves up for lost,—when their guardian angel again appears, and conducting them by slow marches in the night, along the banks of the river, took them to the wharf at Port Margot ; when, telling them they were entirely out of danger, he took his last leave, and went to join the rebels.

upwards of 2000 white persons perished ; of the insurgents, not less than 10,000 died by famine and the sword, hundreds by the hand of the executioner, and many, dreadful to relate, upon the wheel, a mode of revenge not to be justified by any enormity. “ Two of these unhappy men (says Mr. Edwards) suffered in this manner under the window of the author’s lodgings, and in his presence, at Cape François, on Thursday the 28th of September 1791. They were broken on two pieces of timber placed crosswise. One of them expired on receiving the third stroke on his stomach, each of his legs and arms having been first broken in two places ; the first three blows he bore without a groan. The other had a harder fate. When the executioner, after breaking his legs and arms, lifted up the instrument to give the finishing stroke on the breast, and which (by putting the criminal out of pain) is called *le coup de grace*, the mob, with the ferociousness of cannibals, called out *arretez* (stop) ! and compelled him to leave his work unfinished. In that condition, the miserable wretch, with his broken limbs doubled up, was put on a cart-wheel, which was placed horizontally one end of the axle-tree being driven into the earth. He seemed perfectly sensible, but uttered not a groan. At the end of forty minutes, some English seamen, who were spectators of the tragedy, strangled him in mercy.”

In the western division the insurgents were principally people of colour, who appeared in arms to the number of 2000, in the parish of Mirebalais. They



proceeded even to Port au Prince ; but happily at this period a reconciliation was brought about by the good offices of a Monsieur de Jumecourt, who procured a *concordat*, or truce, between the inhabitants of Port au Prince and the mulattoes ; of which the terms were, that hostilities should cease, and the decree of the 15th be adopted. The assembly of Cape François passed many resolutions in favour of the people of colour, and testified a zeal for their interest ; which kindness, if shown at one period, would have prevented many a dreadful transaction, but the cure was now administered too late.

## CHAPTER VI.

Repeal of the Décrée of the 15th of May—Civil War renewed—  
 Port au Prince destroyed by Fire—Cruelties on each Side—  
 Arrival of the Commissioners from France—Appointment and  
 Proceedings of the New Commissioners—Appointment of Gol-  
 baud—Hostilities on both Sides—The revolted Negroes called  
 in—Massacre of the Inhabitants of Cape François, and Confla-  
 gration of the Town.

ABOUT the beginning of September, the news of the reception given to the decree of the 15th of May, were received at Paris, and the loss of the colony was universally apprehended. By this time most of those members whose opinions upon colonial matters had before been regarded as sagacious, were treated with disrespect. At length (strange to tell)! on the 24th of September 1791, a repeal of the celebrated decree was actually made. To such absurdity must every government be driven, that attempts to rule the actions of a colony at the distance of 3000 miles.

Previous to this time, the mulattoes, still suspicious, lest their rights which had been recognized, should not be actually obtained, had procured a second instrument, and a supplementary agreement of the 20th of October; but when authentic information of this second enactment of the national assembly was received, all prospect of reconciliation perished for ever; for the mulattoes could not conceive the planters as guilty of the transaction. They

accordingly flew to arms, and being in many places joined by the negroes, terrible engagements took place. In the district of Cul de Sac, 2000 blacks were left dead on the field. The whites were victorious, and getting the mulattoes into their possession, fatiated their revenge with the most unheard-of cruelties. The specimens of enormity committed on each side of this unnatural dispute, are too hideous for description; but it is but justice to say, that the whites set the example. It was fondly expected that the horror of these mutual enormities would be assuaged by the arrival of the three civil commissioners from France, who landed in St. Domingo just at the close of the year 1791. Unhappily, however, their success did not verify the public expectation.

Roome, Mirbeck, and St. Leger, were the names of the commissioners. The two last were men of no very respectable characters. Roome alone conducted himself without offence, but none of them possessed abilities for the arduous task of extinguishing a civil war. After a short stay at Cape François, they visited the other parts of the colony; but finding their authority dwindle away, they returned to France the following spring.

In the mean time, the Amis de Noirs in the mother country had once more gained that ascendancy which the revocation of the celebrated decree of the 15th May 1791 evinced them to have lost. The first signal evidence of the change that had taken place in the minds of the legislature, was the famous



decree of the 4th of April 1792, which it is necessary the reader should have at large, to understand the effects that arose in consequence. New commissioners (Messrs. Santhonax, Polverel, and Ailhaud) were now appointed to fulfil this decree, 6000 chosen men from the national guards were embarked for St. Domingo, and a new governor (Mons. Despardes) nominated as commander in chief. The former governor was sent home to France on their first arrival\*. It was strongly suspected that the intention of the commissioners was to procure an unqualified freedom for all the blacks in the island; but they declared, by a solemn oath, that their sole purpose was to establish the rights of the mulattoes, as decreed by the law of the 15th of May. The first petition of the whites was therefore to convoke a colonial assembly; but instead of their wished-for house of representatives, the commissioners substituted what was called *Une Commission Intermediaire*, by nominating 12 persons, of whom six had been of the last assembly, and the other six were mulattoes. Their legislative authority extended to the raising of contributions upon the inhabitants, but the commissioners reserved the power of appropriating it to themselves. The new governor, finding that the commissioners usurped all authority, complained, that he was but a cypher in public affairs. His complaint was answered by an arrest upon his person, and he was sent home state prisoner to France.

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\* He was afterwards guillotined.

The tyranny of the commissioners did not stop here, they overawed the members of the commission *Intermediaire*, by arresting four of their number, and lastly disagreeing among themselves, expelled Ailhaud from their triumvirate. War was by this time declared between the mother country and Britain, and prudence compelled the government of France to take some care of the injured colony, which lay trampled under the avaricious controul of Santhonax and Polverel, and Galbaud, a man of fair character, was ordered to fill the place of governor, and to put the island in a state of defence against external invasion. On the 10th of June 1793, the three commissioners had their first interview with the new governor. The former asked him if he had acquainted the executive council of his being a possessor of West Indian property? a question which utterly disconcerted him; for he never recollected, till that moment, that this circumstance, by law, excluded him from the place he affected to hold. Skirmishes soon after took place, with various success, between the associates of Galbaud and those of the commissioners. In one of these, Polverel's son was made prisoner. When proposals were made to him for exchanging the young man with the brother of Galbaud, who was made, on the other hand, prisoner by the commissioners troops, he sternly replied, That his son knew his duty, and was prepared to die in the cause of the republic.

But the most dreadful enormity that St. Domingo witnessed, remains to be mentioned. On the ap-

proach of Galbaud, with a body of his adherents, the commissioners offered to purchase the aid of the rebel negroes, by the offer of a pardon, freedom in future, and the plunder of the capital. Two of the rebel chiefs refused the base terms; but a third (after Galbaud had fled to the ships), with 3000 revolted negroes, entered the town, and began an indiscriminate massacre. The miserable inhabitants fled to the shores, but their retreat was stopped by a party of mulattoes, and for two days the slaughter was incessant. The town was half consumed by flames, a capital once flourishing and beautiful. The commissioners, terrified at the destruction of their own hands, fled for protection to a ship of the line, and from thence published a manifesto, which, while it tried to extenuate, evinced a consciousness of their guilt.



## CHAPTER VII.

Situation, Extent, and General Description of St. Domingo—  
Original of the French Colony—Description of its Produce  
and Population—Shipping and Exports.

ST. DOMINGO lies about 3500 miles from the Land's End of England, the eastern point being in north latitude  $18^{\circ} 20'$ , and in longitude  $68^{\circ} 40'$  west from Greenwich. The breadth of the island is about 140 miles at its utmost latitude, and its length from east to west 390. The soil is diversified, but in general rich. Indeed, such was its flourishing situation, that until the late undistinguishing ravages of civil war, it might be justly called the paradise of the new hemisphere.

The beautiful savannahs in the interior of the country were depopulated by the merciless Spaniards, and their habitations converted into a desert. But the crimes of these men were amply punished by that association of daring adventurers called the Buccaneers. This association, it is well known, arose from a body of French and English planters, whom the cruelty of the Spaniards drove from St. Christopher's. In open boats they had escaped to the small and unoccupied island of Tortuga, within a few miles of the northern coast of St. Domingo, and were here joined by a number of Dutch refugees, who fled hither from Santa Cruz before the persecution of the Spaniards. The three tribes of

sufferers continued to live here in tranquillity, using the large and deserted plains of St. Domingo as their hunting grounds; but reserving Tortuga as their home. Simple and harmless as their lives were, they did not escape the notice of the Spanish government; for, upon no other pretext than their living upon a hemisphere which the Spaniards claimed exclusively to themselves, they were assailed with all the vengeance of persecution. Thus driven to despair, they retaliated hostilities with all their efforts; and as they were inured to hardship by their manner of life, performed acts of valour, which, considering all circumstances, never were nor have since been equalled. From a party of these adventurers, the French colony of St. Domingo first received its name. Of the progressive improvement of this colony, from their first footing in the island, till they were received within the protection of France, a very satisfactory account may be had in the history of the island by Pere Charlevoix.

The possessions of the French in St. Domingo are divided into three provinces, the Northern, the Western, and the Southern. The most remarkable of their towns and harbours are Cape François, and Cape St. Nicholas. The former contained between eight and nine hundred houses of stone, a church, a prison, a playhouse, a superb barrack, an arsenal, and a good hospital. To the east of it lies a plain of 50 miles in length, and 12 in breadth, once cultivated solely for sugar, the plantations of which yield-

ed greater returns than any other ground of the same extent in the habitable globe.

The town of St. Nicholas consists of about 250 houses, mostly built of American wood. It is chiefly known, for the safety and extent of its harbour, and is justly called the key to the Windward Passage.

Port au Prince (except in time of war) was considered as the capital of the colony. To the east of it lies the noble and beautiful plain, the Cul de Sac, extending from 30 to 40 miles in length, by 9 in breadth, containing an hundred and fifty well watered and valuable plantations.

The population, in 1790, appears to have been 30,831 whites of both sexes, exclusive of European troops and sea-faring people. The number of negro slaves amounted at that period to 480,000 of all descriptions.

The number of the free people of colour was not accurately ascertained; but the general opinion fixed them at 24,000.

The quantity of land in a state of cultivation throughout all the parishes, was equal to 229,480 acres of English measure, of which about two thirds were situated in the mountains.

In the beginning of 1790, the colony contained

431 plantations of clayed sugar

362 - - - of muscovado.

Total 793 plantations of sugar,

Carried over, 793



Brought forward, 793	sugar plantations.
3,117	of coffee,
789	of cotton,
3,160	of indigo,
54	of cacao, or chocolate,
623	smaller settlements, chiefly for raising grain, yams, and other vegetable food.

Making 8,536 establishments all kinds  
throughout the colony.

In the year 1787 there were freighted 470 ships,  
containing 112,253 tons, and navigated by 11,220  
seamen. The following is an accurate account from  
the intendant's reports of the general exports on  
an average of three years :

			Livres.
Clayed sugar	lbs.	58,642 214 —	41,049,549
Muscovado	lbs.	86,549,829 —	34,619,931
Coffee -	lbs.	71,603,187 —	71,603,187
Cotton -	lbs.	6,698,858 —	12,397,716
Indigo -	Hhds.	951,607 —	8,564,463
Molasses .	Hhds.	23,061 —	2,767,320
An inferior sort of rum, called taffia	Hhds.	2,600 —	312,000
Raw hides -	No.	6,500 —	52,000
Tanned ditto	No.	7,900 —	118,500

The total value at the ports of shipping,  
in livres of St. Domingo, was 171,544.666  
being equal to 4,765,129l. Sterling money of Great  
Britain. Z z

## CHAPTER VIII.

Overtures to the British Government—Slavery abolished by the French Commissioners—Surrender of Jeremie and the Mole at St. Nicholas—Defeat at Tiburon—Capture of Port au Prince—Sickness and dreadful Mortality among the Troops—Revolt of the Mulattoes at St. Marc—Second Attack of Tiburon—Gallant Escape of the Garrison.

AFTER the massacre at Cape Francois, numbers of the unfortunate natives emigrated to America; and, to the honour of that country, were hospitably received. But some time previous to this period, individuals in a higher station of life had resorted to Britain, and, in the heat of their indignation at the injuries they had sustained, called upon the British government to take the island into their possession. These entreaties were at first disregarded, but when the war broke out between the two nations, the plan was taken into serious consideration.

The republican commissioners had brought out from France six thousand chosen troops. To this force was added the greatest part of the mulattoes and free negroes, composing in all a desperate band of about 25,000 men. But as their force was greatly diminished by being necessarily scattered over the provinces, the commissioners, in order to strengthen their party, declared all slavery at an end, on condition of the blacks resorting to their standard. Numbers joined them in consequence of this decla-

ration; but many remained with their respective masters, and about 10,000 retreated to the mountains, where they kept in a neutral state. There still remained, however, about 40,000 of those negroes who had formerly revolted, who were inured to murder and devastation, and the sworn foes of both invaders and inhabitants.

General Williamson was the man to whom the British government entrusted the distribution and management of this important invasion. Inspired with a fatal confidence in the promises of support which he received, he seems to have miscalculated the force necessary for such a business; for the whole armament destined to subdue an extent of country equal to that of Britain itself, was the 13th regiment of foot, seven companies of the 49th, and a detachment of artillery, amounting altogether to about 870 rank and file fit for duty.

On the 9th of September, Colonel Whitelocke sailed with the first division, and took possession of Jeremie, with consent of the inhabitants. Shortly after, the garrison of the Mole of St. Nicholas declared an inclination to surrender, and possession was accordingly taken of the harbour and fort; but the future progress of the British arms did not equal the expectations excited by these surrenders. An attack upon Tiburon, which terminated in disaster and disappointment on our side, was but a prelude to the mortifications that ensued. The incessant rains and severity of duty overpowered and debilitated the soldiers, while the horrors of the yellow



fever consummated their misery. A small reinforcement from Britain, for a moment, alleviated their danger, and a second assault upon Tiburon was proposed. By the singular gallantry of Major Spencer, and his resolute followers, the place was carried by storm. Surprising to relate, only three English soldiers were killed, and seven wounded, in forcing a post of such importance. The next attempt was on the town of Port Paix, where Lavaux, the commander of the French troops, was offered a bribe if he would betray his trust. But the brave veteran answered this odious proposal, by challenging to single combat the British commander, who had so grossly insulted him. Colonel Whitelocke, who had conducted this abortive attempt, succeeded better in his next object, which was the reduction of Le Aeul, in the vicinity of Leogane. His orders for assaulting the fort were gallantly and rapidly executed by his troops; but a number of valuable officers were wounded and killed in the engagement. A defeat from superior numbers at a place called Bompard, fifteen miles from St. Nicholas, and a fall from the newly obtained fort of Tiburon, which, though successful in repelling the enemy, was effected with much blood, served to check the fortune of our army.

On the 19th of May 1794, a second reinforcement of three British regiments arrived in St. Domingo; so that new hopes arose, and new attacks were meditated. Port au Prince was all along the grand object of our army; but it was necessary to reduce Fort Bizotton before the capital could possibly fall.

Two line of battle ships were therefore ordered to play upon the sea front of the fortress; and in the evening 300 British and 500 hundred colonial troops were set ashore to carry it by assault. On their march upwards, a terrible storm of thunder and lightning came on, accompanied with rain, which, as it overpowered the sound of their approach, Captain Daniel of the 41st regiment took advantage of the favourable opportunity, and advanced with his men, 60 in number, who, rushing with fixed bayonets through a breach in the wall, actually carried a fort defended by nine times their number. Port au Prince, it is well known, was subjected in consequence of this success, in the harbour of which were captured a fleet of shipping, at a moderate computation, worth 400,000 l. Sterling.

But even this temporary success of the British arms served to increase the sum of disaster which our countrymen were doomed to endure. Port au Prince was, from its situation, a post difficult to be retained, immense preparations were necessary to secure it from being recaptured, and the labour of the soldiers, in digging trenches and raising fortifications, became of course intolerable. These miserable labourers, worn out with working and watching, either dropped into the grave, or continued in a state of illness that hardly permitted them to bear the weight of their arms. New supplies arrived from home; but the frigate which conveyed them had been already a house of pestilence; numbers had been buried in the deep, and the survivors coming like

skeletons from their hospital, only served to perfect the scene of distress. In the space of two months from the capture of Port au Prince, 600 men and 40 officers perished from our little army, by no other enemy than sickness.

General Hornbeck now succeeded General Whyte, whose ill health had obliged him to return home. The weakness of the British was at this period so apparent as even to invite invasion. Rigaud, a commander of the republican troops, with 2000 men assaulted Fort Bizotton; but was routed and repulsed with great slaughter; for distress, it would appear, in its severest shape, had not yet been able to subdue the spirit of our unfortunate countrymen. Though repulsed so effectually, however, in this instance, Rigaud meditated the attack of Tiburon with aggravated strength. On the 23d of December 1794, his naval force, consisting of a 16 gun brig, and three schooners of 14 guns each, sailed from Aux Cayes to the siege of Tiburon, with land troops consisting of 3000 men of all colours and descriptions. On Christmas day our garrison of 400 men met the first onset, and for four days resisted the most furious assaults of the besiegers; but finding their numbers so terribly diminished (for 300 had already perished), the survivors, headed by Lieutenant Bradford of the 23d regiment, sallied out on the enemy, and, with unexampled bravery, fought their way for five miles, and got safe to Irois. A Lieutenant Baskerville was on this occasion (by some unlucky accident) unable to join his companions. Aware of the fate that



awaited him, and resolved to avoid a shameful death from the hand of a savage enemy, he put a period to his existence as Rigaud entered the fort.

With this disastrous occurrence terminated the year 1794. It remains for future events to decide under whose power this colony shall be ultimately fixed; but no one can peruse the records of its protracted and bloody disputes without lamenting the mournful and untimely deaths which it has witnessed.

## CHAPTER IX.

Ancient State of the Spanish Colony—The Establishment of the Town of St. Domingo—Pillaged by Drake in 1586—Numbers and Character of the present Inhabitants.

THE Spanish colony in Hispaniola was the earliest ever established in the new world; but in less than a century, the discovery of gold and silver in Mexico led the Spaniards to abandon the exhausted mines they had dug here, and repair to the continent for new supplies. Of the French settlement we have already described the origin.

The Spanish territories are, upon the whole, less fertile than the other parts of the island; in particular, the whole tract from Isabella to Old Cape François (Puerto de Plata alone excepted) is entirely a desert for 15 miles. Nor, after passing the Bay of Samana, does a much better prospect offer, until coasting round the eastern extremity, we reach a vast extent of level country called the Plains, at the west end of which, on the banks of the river Ozama, stands the metropolis, which was founded by Columbus, 1498, and named St. Domingo, in honour of St. Dominic, for many years the capital of the new world. Oviedo, a Spanish historian, who resided in it 30 years after its first establishment, gives the following account of it, the translation of which is still preserved.

“ But nowe (says the Historian) to speake sum-  
what of the principall and chiefe place of the islande,  
which is the citie of *San Domenico*: I saye, that as  
touchynge the buildyngs, there is no citie in Spaine,  
so muche for so-muche (no not *Barfalona*, whiche  
I have oftentimes seene) that is to bee preferred  
before this generallye. For the houses of *San Do-  
menico* are for the moste parte of stone, as are they  
of *Barfalona*. The situation is muche better than  
that of *Barfalona*, by reason that the streates are  
much larger and playner, and without comparyson  
more directe and strayght furth. For beinge bulyd-  
ed nowe in our tyme, besyde the commoditie of the  
place of the foundation, the streates were also di-  
rected with corde compase and measure; wherein it  
excelleth al the cities that I have sene. It hath  
the sea so nere, that of one syde there is no more  
space between the sea and the citie, then the waules,  
On the other parte, hard by the syde and at the  
foote of the houses, passeth the ryver *Ozama*, whiche  
is a marvelous porte; wherein laden shypes ryse  
very nere to the lande, and in manner under the  
house wyndowes. In the mydde of the citie is  
the fortresse and castle; the port or haven also, is  
so fayre and commodious to defraight or unlade  
shyppes, as the lyke is founde but in few places of  
the worlde. The chymineis that are in this citie  
are about fyxe hundreth in number, and such  
houses as I have spoken of before; of the which  
sum are so fayre and large that they maye well re-  
ceave and lodge any lorde or noble manne of



Spayne, with his trayne and familie; and especially that which Don Diego Colon, viceroy under your majestie, hath in this citie, is suche that I knowe no man in Spayne that hath the lyke, by a quarter, in goodnesse, confyderynge all the commodities of the same. Lykewyse the situation thereof as beinge above the sayde porte, and altogyther of stone, and havyng many faire and large roomes, with as goodly a prospect of the lande and sea as may be devyfed, seemeth unto me so magnifical and princelyke, that your magestie may bee as well lodged therein as in any of the moste exquisite builded houses of Spayne. There is also a cathedrall church buylde of late, where, as well the byshop accordyng to his dygnitie, as also the canones, are wel indued. This church is well buylded of stone and lyme, and of good woorkemanshype. There are further-more three monasteries bearyng the names of Saynt Dominike, Saynt Frances, and Saynt Mary of Mercedes; the whiche are well buylded, although not so curiouslye as they of Spayne. There is also a very good hospitall for the ayde and succour of pore people, whiche was founded by Michaell Passamont, threasurer to your majestie. To conclude, this citie fro day to day increaseth in welth and good order, as well for that the sayde admyrall and viceroy, with the lorde chaunceloure and counsaile appoynted there by your majestie, have theyr continuall abydnge here, as also that the ryche men of the ilande resort hyther, for theyr moste commodious habitation and

trade of such merchaundies as are eyther brought owt of Spayne, or sent thyther from this iland, which nowe so abundeth in many thynges, that it serveth Spayne with many commodities, as it were with usury requityng such benefites as it fyrst received from thence."

Sixty years afterwards it was attacked by Drake, who, after possessing it a month, thought himself justified to set it on fire. Of this barbarous transaction the following record is preserved in Hakluyt's Collection: "We spent the early part of the mornings (says the historian of the voyage) in firing the outmost houses; but they being built very magnificently of stone, with high loftes, gave us no small travell to ruin them. And albeit, for divers dayes together, we ordeined ech morning, by day-break, until the heat began at nine of the clocke, that two hundred mariners did nought els but labour to fire and burn the said houses, whilst the souldiers, in a like proportion, stood forth for their guard; yet did we not, or could not, in this time, consume so much as one third part of the towne; and so in the end, wearied with firing, we were contented to accept of five and twenty thousand ducats, of five shillings and sixpence the peece, for the ranfome of the rest of the towne."

It is difficult to obtain exact information respecting the present condition of this once flourishing city. It is certainly on the decline, but not, as Raynal asserts, absolutely in ruins. As little seems to be known about the state of agriculture

in these possessions, as about the present condition of the Spanish capital. Their exports of sugar and tobacco are undoubtedly very inconsiderable; for the chief article of exportation appears to be the hides of horned cattle. It seems probable, indeed, that the greater part of the Spanish property in this island, once the paradise of a happy people, is now abandoned to the beasts of the field, and the vultures that hover round them.

The accounts of their population are also scanty and unsatisfactory. By the earliest historians we learn, that there were at one period 14,000 Castilians in Hispaniola. Its mines were at that time a very productive property, yielding an annual revenue of more than 100,000*l.* Sterling; but when these were exhausted, the colony dwindled into penury, sloth, and depopulation.

The origin of the introduction of slaves has been traced in another place; but this does not seem to have augmented their population. In 1717, the number of all inhabitants, slaves and freemen, was only 18,410, and since that time their numbers have certainly decreased. Of pure whites the number perhaps is 3000.

The character of these Spanish colonists, if we may judge from their conduct during the present war, is not of the most unexceptionable kind. Their behaviour to the French loyalists was marked with the meanest national animosity, and to the English they were jealous and treacherous friends. On the whole, there is reason to suppose, that a great part



of them are a base and degenerate race ; a motley mixture from European, Indian, and African ancestry. They are neither polished by intercourse with mankind, nor improved by cultivation, but live in a gloomy languor, enfeebled by sloth, and depressed by poverty.

Of those negroes in St. Domingo whom the interposition of France has let loose from the fetters of slavery, it is difficult to see what will be the future situation. If, from having witnessed the benefits of civilized life, they should dismiss the ferocious pursuits of savages, they may yet attain to an eminent rank in the knowledge of truth and the practice of virtue. But experience has shown us, that emancipation, though requisite to make men dignified and good, will not operate without other means to sublimate human nature. The Maroon negroes of Jamaica, and the Charaibes of St. Vincent, are not the slaves of white men, but they are still savages in the midst of polished society ; and what these now are, it is, alas ! to be feared, that the negroes of St. Domingo will hereafter be.

F I N I S.

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